

Want me to do WHAT?

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"What?" Harry asked dull.

"You heard us Potter," Snape sneered. "Draco is some sort of man veela and he's chosen you for his mate."

"But we hate each other?" Harry looked at the Headmaster. "Why the hell does he want to marry me."

"That's a matter for the two of you to discuss Harry," the Headmaster smiled gently. "Now all we have to do is perform the ceremony and you will be Mrs. Malfoy."

"What?" Harry couldn't believe that Dumbledore was expecting him to go through with this.

"Always the spoiled child," Snape sneered again. "You don't expect the scion of the Malfoy family to take the name of Potter do you?"

"I meant why do you expect that I'll agree to this?" Harry stared at the Headmaster in shock.

"Because if you don't, I'm afraid that young Mr. Malfoy will die," the Headmaster shook his head sadly. "And I know that you don't want that to happen."

"Not wanting it to happen and agreeing to marry Malfoy to stop it are two different things," Harry's eyes scoured the room looking for a way to escape. "Why can't he find someone else?"

"I think it would be best to refer to him as Draco from now on Harry," the Headmaster scolded gently. "And as for why you, well you're the one he's chosen and I'm afraid that he might go dark if you reject him."

"He's dark anyway," Harry couldn't believe this was happening. "What's wrong with you."

"Everyone deserves a chance to stay in the light," Dumbledore ignored Harry's objections. "And to be quite frank, your attitude about this situation is starting to disturb me."

"Disturb you?" Harry asked shrilly, "I'm the one that you're trying to marry off to Malfoy."

"It's for the greater good Harry," Dumbledore gave a grandfatherly smile. "Can't you see that."

"Well if it's for the greater good," Harry smiled nervously as a plan began to form. "Can I go back to my dorm for a few hours to gather things?"

"Of course Harry," the Headmaster nodded. "The ceremony won't be held until after the evening meal, so that should give you plenty of time to prepare."

"Bye now." Harry slowly backed out of the room, not wanting to turn his back on either of the two crazy men.

"Are sure Harry will laugh when we tell him that it was all a 'may fools day' prank?" Dumbledore asked his Potions Master, "one would think that this sort of thing would anger him."

"Of course he'll laugh," the oily head of house assured his boss. "Not only will it make him laugh, but I believe it will also foster a greater understanding between the houses."

"Oh, well if you really think so." Dumbledore happily popped a lemon drop in his mouth, "I do have to say though that I'm glad that you're finally forgiving the boy for who his father was."

"Yes, forgiving." Snape resisted the urge to laugh evilly as he imagined the look on the arrogant brat's face when he learned it was all a joke.

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Harry's heart seemed like it was going to explode as he ran towards the Gryffindor common rooms, "Ron." Everybody looked up as he

burst into the room. "Get Hermione, Fred, and George and meet me in our dormitory, and hurry we don't have much time."

Within minutes, Ron had gathered the three students and brought them to the dormitory that he shared with the 'boy-who-lived.' The four of them watched for several seconds as Harry frantically threw items in his trunk before Hermione decided to break the silence, "what are you doing, and why did you call us Harry?"

"Dumbledore wants me to marry Malfoy to keep him from turning Dark," Harry didn't pause his packing. "I need your help to escape Hogwarts and get out of the country before that happens."

"But he can't do that." Ron's face turned as red as his hair, "can he?"

"I'm not going to stay here to find out." Harry had finished his packing and shrunk his trunk, "will you help me or do I have to stun you and leave you tied up?"

"Of course we'll help you," Fred (or George) spoke for the group. "What do you need?"

"I'm going to need you to make excuses for why I'm not around if anybody asks," Harry threw on his invisibility cloak. "The other thing I need is for you to cause as much chaos as possible after dinner, that's when I'm supposed to marry Malfoy and I'm going to need every second I can to escape."

"You can count on us Harry," one of the twins assured their friend. "We won't let him get you."

"You four are the best friends a guy could ask for," Harry wiped a tear from his eye as he prepared to throw up the hood. "And if I never see you again, I just want you to know that I love you guys."

"I'm coming with you Harry," Hermione mustered up her courage. "You've never traveled and you need an experienced guide, without me you wouldn't last a week before you became Mrs. Malfoy."

"Fine," Harry's fear overriding his normal objections, "but what about your unrequited love affair with Ron?"

“What love affair?”

“Well the two of you fight all the time and everyone has been saying that it's because of the sexual tension between the two of you.” Harry spoke quickly, not wanting to waste anymore precious seconds than he had too.

“What?” Ron shouted glancing at Hermione, “the two of us are just friends.”

“Yeah,” Hermione agreed, “by your logic Malfoy would be a better match for Ron than I would be. The two of them fight way more than the two of us do.”

“You don't think I'm next do you Harry?” Ron looked sicked as he considered Hermione's statement, “that if he can't have you, he'll come after me?”

“I don't know Ron,” Harry came to a sudden decision. “But before I go, I'll tell the Goblins to let you access my account if you need to make a quick escape.”

“Thanks Harry,” Ron let out the breath he'd been holding. “You're a real pal.”

“Whatever,” Harry and Hermione began running towards the entrance.

IIIIIIIIII

“I have an announcement to make,” the Headmaster called out at the end of the evening meal.

“This is it guys,” Fred looked at the Hard faced Gryffindors that were sitting around him, “look at how smug those snake bastards are, let's give 'em hell.”

A cheer from the Gryffindor table interrupted whatever the Headmaster was going to say next and the explosions that followed threatened to bring down the Great Hall's ceiling.

The entire Gryffindor table erupted in fury and began casting spells at the Slytherin table, "give 'em hell lads." Ron Weasley led the charge, "don't let up for one minute."

"Stop this at once," the Headmaster raised his voice and began walking towards the conflict, only to be stopped by a cute little first year.

"I won't let you," the little girl called out defiantly as she confronted the man that was widely regarded as the most powerful in the wizarding world.

"What?" Dumbeldore looked down at the child in confusion, "argelmocsck." And then bit down on his tongue to keep from filling her young ears with obscenity's from the pain in his shin.

"Take that," she cried kicking the headmaster in the other shin.

It took several hours for the professors to restore order and several more to coax the Gryffindor out of the empty class room where they had made their last stand (in the end several teams of Aurors had been called in and even then it took nearly three hours and Molly Weasley to get them to come out).

"What's this all about?" McGonagall hissed as she stared at her charges with undisguised rage, "what could possibility cause you to revolt against the headmaster and attempt to destroy the school?"

The assorted Gryffindors stared at their head of house and maintained their silence.

"Well?" Minerva was close to the breaking point.

"We had ta protect Harry," a familiar little girl shot the headmaster a look that promised pain. "From having to marry Malfoy."

"What?" Minerva looked lost, "what would give you the idea that Mr. Potter's had to be protected?"

"He told us that the headmaster was trying to force him to marry Malfoy to keep him from going dark," Ron's jaw ached from being hit

in one of the Auror's early attempts to force them out of their room.  
"We may not be Hufflepuffs but we look after our own."

As one the rest of the Gryffindor house nodded their agreement.  
"That's absurd, the headmaster would never . . ." the headmaster cleared his throat, interrupting the Gryffindor head of house. "Albus?"

"It was all suppose to be a joke," the Headmaster smiled nervously.  
"Severus was telling me of a delightful muggle custom called may fools day and I didn't see the harm in pranking Harry for once."

"WHAT?" Minerva lost control. "You are going to apologize to Mr. Potter right now and you are not going to do something like this again, or I swear to you if this happens again I'll be right there beside my children throwing hexes."

"Of course," the Headmaster nodded regaining a bit of control. "Now if you'll just tell me where Harry is so I can apologize to him?" The Gryffindors all gave him hostile glares, "I assure you that I never had any intention of forcing Harry to marry Mr. Malfoy and further more ankalrenrd."

The little girl nodded in satisfaction as she watched the Headmaster bite his tongue to refrain from cursing again, "I don't believe you."

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AN: Another odd idea, the blame for this can be laid solely at the feet of Fangalla Marie.

Harry Moody?

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Minerva looked sadly at the house where ‘those dreadful muggles’ lived and tried again to convince Albus that it was no place to leave a magical child.

“I’m sorry Minerva but . . .” Albus slumped to the ground, the victim of a powerful stunner.

“Albus” Minerva cried before joining him in the land of nod.

Out of the shadows came a heavily scarred man with a horrible grin, using several well practiced wand movements he modified their memories, “you dropped the boy off, you don’t think Figg will be needed, and if you ever need someone to check on the boy then you’ll call your old pal Moody.”

“I just couldn’t let him leave you here lad” he wrapped a scarred hand around the sleeping child’s basket and gave a rather frightening smile, “you’d never reach your potential living here, but I promise you boy that with me teaching you you’ll be great.”

Baby Harry didn’t awake at the sound of his new guardian’s voice and the world changed.

“Constant Vigilance” Moody yelled at the two unconscious Professors before absconding into the night with the sleeping form of the boy-who-lived.

Unknown Location, ten years later . . .

Moody smirked as he entered his son’s room, gathering his energies he cast a stunner at the bed, “Constant Vig . . .”

His trademark phrase was cut short by the impact of a large blunt instrument to the side of his head.

“Constant Vigilance” eleven year old Harry cried as he began pummeling his ‘father.’

Grunting in frustration, Moody grabbed his son's makeshift weapon, "what have I told you about attacking with a club?"

"Go for the soft tissue" Harry replied sullenly.

"And why didn't you follow that advice?" Moody's voice was dangerously calm.

"Because you taught me to go for the soft tissue" Harry replied quietly, "and I figured that you would be wearing groin protection of some kind."

"Decided to use my 'Constant Vigilance' against me eh?" Moody eyed the boy, "good job."

Harry brightened, "does that mean that I did the right thing?"

"Means that you're learning" Moody agreed, "good job. Letter arrived for you today boy."

"What was in it?" Harry eyed his mentor wearily, "who sent it?"

"It was your Hogwarts Letter," Moody smirked, "and what makes you think that I checked it?"

"Constant Vigilance"

"That's me boy," the scarred man said proudly as he wiped a tear from the corner of his eye.

"What are we going to do about the letter?" Harry eyed his mentor, looking for any opening in the older man's defense.

"Well," Moody responded, "I was thinking that we could go and get your school supplies, be a good idea to get you a wand that is on the books anyway."

"So they don't think of looking for my other wands?"

"That's part of it," Moody agreed.



“Can I also get a new eye like yours?” Harry asked hopefully, “I don’t like not knowing if there are people lurking about under invisibility cloaks.”

“We’ll see,” Moody smiled indulgently

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AN: Just a bit of fun.

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I’ve always been a bit annoyed at the fics that have Harry and (insert name here) suddenly develop feelings for each other after being separated, the plot goes on to hit several predictable points. If you feel the same then this OMAKE is for you, and in this OMAKE, I’m going to distill the important plot points that other authors take several chapters to write into a few lines.

“I can’t believe I never saw it,” Harry whispered to his new lover, “all this time I denied myself the happiness I deserved because I was unwilling to see you as anything but a friend.”

“Don’t talk like that,” a tear fell out of the corner of the woman’s eye, “we’re together now and that’s all that matters.”

“But how could I allow you to place yourself in danger by loving me,” Harry began to sob, “if it weren’t for me you could be dating someone else and you would be safe.”

The woman gently stroked her grieving lover, “without you in my life I wouldn’t be living, in fact from now on I insist on everyone calling me Mrs. Potter.”

“Are you sure that you want to marry me?” Harry’s sobs had abated and he began trembling.

“Of course I do, now let’s go find a broom closet to snog in.”

“Sure thing Professor McGonagall,” Harry wrapped his arms around the love of his life, “your wish is my command.”

“Harry,” the woman cooed, “after all the things that we’ve done to each other tonight, I think that it would be appropriate to call me Minnie.”

## A more Traditional 'Harry in Azkaban Story'

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It had been three months since he had been thrown into Azkaban for the murder of one of the less important characters (shall we say . . . a Hufflepuff named Stebbins) and he could still remember Dumbledore's disappointed look as the Dementors dragged him away.

Holding a bony hand in front of his face Harry began talking to himself to move the plot along, "good thing I had all that time at the Dursleys." He managed to force a grin, "else I wouldn't be so use to starving."

"Here's your gruel you bastard." Sadistic Ministry Guard #5 spat out as he tossed a bowl of barely edible mystery food into the cell, "and I hope you choke on it."

Crawling over to the puddle of gruel, Harry began gathering it up forcing himself to eat it, "what I wouldn't give to have Dobby here right now," he muttered to himself, "then I could have . . ."

"You called Harry Potter Sir?" Dobby appeared, cutting off the muttering.

"What are you doing here?" Harry asked the small elf in shock, "and how did you get past the wards?"

"You called me Harry Potter Sir," the small elf looked up in concern.

"So because I called you, you came?" Harry began to look annoyed, "are you telling me that I could have called you three months ago and gotten out of this hell hole?"

"Yes Harry Potter Sir." Dobby nodded, "Dobby has been waiting and waiting but it wasn't until now that Harry Potter called."

Harry just looked at the small elf in shock and then he shrugged his shoulders, "screw it," he turned to the small elf, "Dobby, take me out of here."

"Ok," Dobby nodded happily and then, with a flash Azkaban was missing one prisoner. "Where does Harry Potter Sir wish to go?"

“Somewhere I can get cleaned up,” Harry looked down at his dirty robes. “And somewhere I can get some new clothes.”

|||||

Version 02

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Staring at the cold damp walls of his cell, Harry Potter began to laugh. It had taken nearly a year of solitary confinement and daily beatings, but he finally got the joke. His whole life was nothing more than a means of entertainment for the sheep in the wizarding world.

Until now, he had been miserable, broken, and depressed at the thought that his friends had betrayed him but now . . . now he just found it hilarious.

Outside, a lone guard began to approach to investigate the sound of laughter, a sound rarely heard within the walls of the prison.

Slowly, cautiously he opened the door to the cell belonging to one of the prison's most infamous inmates.

Harry looked up in annoyance, the guard's presence breaking his concentration. In a flash, the his happiness turned to rage, the guard didn't even have time to scream before he was rendered unconscious by the boy who lived.

Looking down at his handy work, Harry smiled. Stripping the guard of his wand and other valuables, and pausing only to relock the door to his cell. Harry Potter replicated a feat first performed by his godfather, Harry Potter escaped.

Due to a previously unknown flaw in the wards, it would be several months before his absence was noticed. With the presence of the guard in Harry Potter's cell, the wards of Azkaban reported no escape. Why would they? There were no missing prisoners.

Harry Potter did not waste a moment of his freedom, the first thing he give an updated version of Tom Riddle's will to the goblins. It was

amazing what one could accomplish and more importantly what one could forage when they had access to a man's memories and a portion of his power.

Smirking evilly, Harry prepared to enact the next portion of his plan. The reunion of the two people that showed him any loyalty.

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"Hello Harry, It's always nice of you to visit, and even though you are nothing more than a fragment of my subconscious that appears real due to side affect of the anti psychotic potions they have been forcing me to take. And how are you today?"

"I'm fine Hermione, and you?"

"I'd be better if you were real." Hermione shrugged, "or if you weren't and the real you was out of prison."

"I am real and not in prison," Harry smiled. "I staged a daring rescue last night and brought you here, you've spent the last twelve hours in detox."

"That's nice," Hermione smiled. "Have you rescued Lupin yet?"

"I rescued him a couple hours ago," Harry nodded. "Why were you in a mental hospital anyway?"

"Well," Hermione began. "After your trial, Dumbledore decided that I was insane because I doubted him and believed in your innocence. So, using his powers of loco parentis he had me committed."

"That sucks," Harry sympathized. "Would you like to come with me to a tropical island I own? Lupin already said yes."

"What ever makes you happy Harry," Hermione nodded and after a moment of thought added. "You're looking remarkably less colorful then normal, are you eating enough?"

"I'm not a hallucination Hermione," Harry smiled. "So I'm not suppose to be in all sorts of strange colors."

"Ok," Hermione nodded. "When do you want to go to the island?"

"Right after I defeat Voldemort," Harry shrugged. "Despite the fact that I've been locked up in prison, I've got the feeling that the battle will be remarkably short and one sided."

"That's not a good thing Harry," Hermione reminded him with a frown. "And why do you want to defeat him anyway?"

"Well, it might be so that everybody feels bad about locking me up when I hadn't committed any crime or it might be to get revenge on my parents," Harry looked a bit sheepish. "I haven't decided yet."

"Why would they feel guilty Harry?" Hermione looked puzzled. "They don't believe you're innocent."

"Forgot to mention that I was going to wait until after Voldemort admitted that he had framed me before killing him." Harry said turning a bit red, "I'm sorry but I'm having a hard time remembering these things."

"That's ok Harry," Hermione patted his hand. "When do you plan to do this anyway?"

"Oh no," Harry checked his watch. "If I don't hurry, I'm going to arrive late and then I won't have the satisfaction of gloating."

"Hurry back Harry," Hermione smiled. This hallucination was much nicer than the last one had been.

Harry returned a few minutes later with a few blood stains on his new robes, "sorry it took so long but I wanted to get in an extra long gloat."

"That's ok," Hermione nodded. "Can we go to that island now?"

"I just have one more thing to do, and then we can leave." Harry smiled and pulled out a piece of parchment.

"What are you doing?" Hermione asked curious as to what her subconscious was trying to tell her conscious.

“Just putting down a form letter so that I don't have to waste time responding to every Owl that the sheep in the wizarding world send me begging me to forgive them.”

“I suppose that's sensible,” Hermione nodded. “Now can we go to the island?”

“Yes Hermione, we can go to the island now.”

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Your letter to Harry Potter has been returned unopened due to the fact that its intended recipient has no wish to maintain contact with the wizarding world. Below is a form letter designed to address as much of the population as possible.

To the wizarding world; if you believed in my innocence, thanks, and if not screw you.

To my former friends; I hate you, if you wish that to change read below.

To Fudge; you are a stupid incompetent git, who should have been smothered at birth to prevent your existence from lowering the collective IQ of humanity.

To the press; First you lionize me, then you vilify and slander me on the flimsiest evidence, all I ask for is consistency either decide that I am the savior of the wizarding world or the anti-Christ, make up your minds.

Note: If you are a house elf or other similar creature in need of employment, please direct all applications to my friend and employee Dobbly.

If any of my former friends no longer wish me to hate them then they must follow these simple steps.

Destroy any and all evidence that we once knew each other.

If asked deny any association with me past, present, and future.

If you see me on the street cross to avoid coming into contact with me.

My loyal friends were killed on the same night I was sentenced to hell; all of you are nothing but cruel mockeries that bear some slight resemblance to my dead companions.

This letter may be reproduced or published free of charge so long as it remains in its original unaltered form.

-Harry James Potter

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AN: Two plot bunnies that I decided to turn into drabbles. Like 'em or hate 'em, I don't care cause they were fun to write. Note: Most of the time there is a formula to the Harry in Azkaban stories that I tried to follow in the second drabble, that's why everybody is acting so OOC. I was looking through my hard drive and I started going through some of my old ideas, a few minutes knocking them into a story and here they are. One of these was almost written instead of Caer Azkaban, but in the end I decided to try something new. To make these, I just turned the loosely connected thoughts into a couple of short drabbles. You might find a few ideas that found their way into Caer Azkaban.

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OMAKE: The scene that inspired me to put this up.

Ron stared at his reflection and shuddered at what he saw, a broken man, a man that had spent too much time in the bottle and not enough in the sun. A man . . . a man that had betrayed his best friend. "Be guilty Harry," Ron's seldom used voice begged. "Cause if you're not, then I could never forgive myself."

It had all seemed so black and white at the time, the Headmaster had told everyone that Harry Potter was guilty and naturally Ron had believed him. It had all seemed so easy at the trial, testifying against his best friend. He hadn't even had to lie, they had lawyers for that.

It wasn't until he saw Harry's reaction to Azkaban's silent guards that he began to feel doubt, that doubt had magnified overtime until it had dominated every aspect of his life.



Turning away from the mirror, Ron broke the seal on another bottle and began to drink his breakfast. "Please be guilty Harry," Ron repeated to the empty room. Hating himself for believing that the boy he had known had turned into the murderer the press had made him out to be.

Walking towards the door, Ron's shoulders dropped a little more. The world was a cold and lonely place.

## CONSTANT VIGILANCE !

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The station was filled with tearful good byes as family's put their children on the train to Hogwarts, no one noticed the two figures enshrouded in shadow.

"Well," Moody's eye spun. "You know what I expect you do, so get to it."

"Yes father," Harry's eye spun as he regarded the world with suspicion. "Do I have your permission to deal with any situations that might crop up?"

"Course ya do son," Moody nodded and took a sip from his flask. "Just remember to keep a low profile."

"Yes father," Harry took a sip from his flask. "Will that be all?"

"One more thing," Moody had a lump in his throat. "Constant Vigilance."

"Yes father," Harry blinked away the forming tears and quashed the urge to hug his father, "you too."

"That's me boy," Moody smiled as he watched his son disillusion himself.

Harry silently boarded the train and set to work. After erecting several wards over his chosen compartment, he set out to find the snack cart.

"Why hello dear," the woman pushing the snack cart smiled down at the odd little boy with the spinning eye. "Couldn't wait for me to get to your compartment?"

"Petrificus Totalus," Harry glared down at the unmoving woman as he dragged her into his compartment. There was no way that he was going to fall for that old trick.

It took Harry twenty minutes to determine that the food in the cart was not poisoned, at least not poisoned with any poison that he could

detect. Harry took a sip of his flask, and another fifteen minutes of questioning the woman with truth serum to determine that. Whoever she was, it didn't look like she was planning to kill him.

Looking down at his prisoner, Harry weighed his options.

"What are you going to do?" The snack cart lady asked fearfully.

"Obliviate," Harry frowned.

The woman blinked as she found herself standing in front of her snack cart, her eyes widened when she checked her watch. She was running late, those poor children that had gone so long without food.

Harry frowned as he watched from his place in the shadows, he had stayed in one place for too long. It was time to move.

Harry was clinging to the bottom of the coal car when the Hogwarts express pulled into the station, carefully waiting until all the students had disembarked. He dropped to the ground and began to follow.

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Minerva looked down at the next name on her list, after Sally-Anne Perks was . . . it took all of her immense will power to keep her stern expression. "Ha . . ." She froze as she felt the point of a wand dig into the back of her neck.

"You weren't planning to call my name out for all to hear were you?" Asked a child's voice that was filled with menace, "why don't we just skip to the next name."

"And why would I do that?" Minerva asked with a frown.

"Because if you don't . . ." The child gave a horrible and unseen leer, "then we'll have to see if the school's healer can reattach heads."

"I see," Minerva's frown deepened. "I suppose that you could walk up to the hat without having your name called out."

The child let out a wheezing laugh that would have sounded more menacing if it hadn't been so high pitched, "you expect me to walk up there in front of everyone? I don't think I'll be doing that."

"I suppose we could have a private sorting in the Headmaster's office later," Minerva smiled as she contemplated the amount of detention she was going to give to the little . . . angel that was holding her at wand point.

"You suppose wrong." Harry frowned, "I'm not going to let anybody go through my mind."

"Then how exactly are you planning to pick a house?" Minerva was two seconds away from doing something . . . regrettable.

"Not planning on having a house," Harry cackled and tossed a small object out into the center of the great hall.

Every eye in the room followed the object, which exploded in a flash of light when it hit the side of the Ravenclaw table.

"CONSTANT VIGILANCE." Harry screamed at the room full of temporally blinded students and staff, before turning to disappear through one of the unguarded doors.

"ALBUS," Minerva's streak cut through the noise made by the panicking students. "We're going to have a meeting after this."

Albus Dumbledore, a man regarded by many to be one of the most powerful men in the world let his smile slip. Things were not going the way he had planned, and for some reason he had a feeling that it was going to be one of those decades.

IIIIIIIIII

"Albus, what's wrong?"

The old wizard blinked, "I think I've been obliviated."

"What?" Minerva pulled out her wand and began eyeing the shadows suspiciously, "how can you tell?"

"I'm a master Legilimencer," the old wizard blinked. "And I have a faint aftertaste in my mouth that leads me to believe that I've been given Veritaserum. I remember that I was walking to my office to have our meeting and I think I heard one of the students yell something, after that it's a blank."

"What did the student yell?" Minerva knew that she should have taken early retirement when it was offered, but noooo she had to decide that instructing Harry Potter was more important than lounging on a beach in the tropics.

"I think it sounded like 'Constant Vigilance' or at least something that sounded like it," the old wizard winced. "I would really like to know how a first year was able to pull this off."

"Isn't that what Moody is always yelling?" Minerva asked with a frown.

"Minerva," Albus frowned. "Talk like that could get a person written out of a story, authors don't like it when plot holes are pointed out."

"Oh," the Transfiguration Professor paused for a second. "What I meant to say was that I don't suspect a thing."

"Neither do I Minerva," Dumbledore's eyes twinkled. "Neither do I."

IIIIIIIIII

Over the next few weeks, a wave of terror swept over Hogwarts. No one was safe from the thing that stalked the castle's halls. It struck like lightning screaming its catch phrase 'constant vigilance' and left its victims dazed and obliviated. Day after day and week after week, more people fell to the creature's magical might until one day . . .

"What's all this?" Snape screamed at the young blood covered boy he found standing in front of one of the girl's toilets.

"What in heavens name happened here?" Minerva's sharp voice asked only seconds later.

"Petrificus Totalus, Petrificus Totalus." Harry glared down at the two Professors as he cast a dozen or so charms to prevent them from moving or posing any kind of threat, "troll in the castle."

"If you even think about Obliviating me," Minerva began in a low hiss. "I'll give you detention for the next eight years."

"How did you know that I was planning to obliviate you?" The small boy with the whirling eye asked.

"Because you haven't bothered to replace memory's with anything," Snape's face showed condescending sneer number fifteen. "What are you an idiot?"

"I'm eleven years old," Harry's voice was flat. "And I'm the one with the wand, what does that make you two?"

"Why you little . . ."

"Though I do have to thank you for the idea," Harry's smile looked sinister (he was trying to look innocent). "Oblivate."

"What did you do to them?" It appeared that the silencing spell that Harry had earlier placed on the bushy haired little girl had worn off.

"Oblivated them," Harry turned away from the unconscious professors. "And now for you . . . don't worry, this . . . won't hurt . . . a bit."

"You can't obliviate me," the young girl insisted.

"Sure I can," Harry couldn't figure out why he was having this conversation. "All I gotta do is wave my wand and say the incantation."

"No," the young girl looked angry. "I mean that if you obliviate me, I could die."

"What?" Harry frowned, "I've obliterated hundreds of people and none of them have died . . . well not from being obliterated anyway."

"If you use magic to modify or erase the memory of a person that may have a head injury," the girl began lecturing. "Then there is a good chance that you will cause permanent damage or death."

"Pops told me something like this might happen some day." Harry grit his teeth thinking back to his father's instructions. "And he said that he had faith that I would do what was necessary."

*"Son," Moody leered, "there may come a time when for some reason or another, you won't be able to erase someone's memory."*

*"What should I do?" Harry asked with a puzzled frown.*

*"Well, the easiest thing to do would be to kill them. The other thing you could do is seduce them, depending on how your tastes run." Moody winked, "just use a bit of the old 'Moody Charm' and you'll have the lasses eating out of your hand."*

"Come with me and we'll get this over with as soon as possible." Harry pulled himself out of the flashback, "I've got things to do and people to . . . talk to."

Hermione shuddered, "what are you going to do?"

"Gonna seduce you of course," Harry gave a horrifying smile. "Just need to use a bit of the ol' Moody charm and you'll willingly defect to my side."

IIIIIIIIII

"What happened to you two?" The Headmaster woke his unconscious staff members.

"Golly gee Mr. Wizard," Snape's voice sounded a bit more . . . high pitched than normal. "I was just walking down the hallways and I found Minny crouched over the body of a troll feasting on its bloody remains."

"And you Minerva?" Albus turned to his other Professor.

"The last thing I remember is that brat defeating my flying monkeys and melting me with a bucket of water.

"I see," Dumbledore sighed again. Things had been so much easier in the old days.

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AN: Here it is, I might have another part or two of this to write or I might not. It all depends on how my life is in the future. I am sorry that I am not updating as much as I would like but work is taking up a large amount of my time at the moment. Yes everybody is OOC, I do not need a dozen reviewers telling me that an eleven year old could not defeat Dumbledore, I don't need people telling me that Harry would never go around cursing people. This is all just for fun.



## Arrangements

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Harry sat stone faced between his two order assigned guards as the Goblin organised his paperwork, "everything seems to be in order Mr. Potter."

"Thank you," Harry nodded. "Why did you ask me to come here?"

"I called you here to resolve the matter of your godfather's will," the Goblin sighed. "And after that we have some unfinished business in regards to your birthday."

"Alright," Harry nodded. "Let's get this over with."

"I will now read from the will of Sirius Black," the Goblin cleared his throat. "I Sirius Black not being of sound mind or body, since if you're hearing this then I've kicked the bucket, I have ceased to be. Want you living people to distribute the following things according to the following people. Remus, you get a house and a quarter of the Black fortune. That comes to about a thousand Galleons and some change at last count. Tonks, you get half of what's left and the Black library which I advise you to read through. Harry, you get the remainder of the Galleons and a choice."

"What choice?" Harry fought to keep his voice from cracking.

"Are you sure that you want to keep your friends in the room while you hear this?" The goblin asked with a raised eyebrow.

"Yes," Harry nodded. "I'm sure."

"Then I'll continue," the Goblin found his place and began to read. "By now, I'm sure that Dumbledore has told you, the old man promised that there would be no more secrets after my death and so you know. Harry, I give you the choice between an envelope containing a Saudi Passport and a portkey to Bangkok and my old school trunk that I've spent months filling with the items that I think will keep you alive. If you take the envelope then I'm sure you'll escape and have a happy

life and if you take the trunk then I'm afraid that we'll soon meet again. Whatever you choose, know that I am proud of you."

"I'll take the trunk," Harry didn't even hesitate. "I won't run away."

"Yes sir," the Goblin waved his hand causing a battered school trunk to appear on the floor. "Would you like some time to look through the contents before we get on to the remainder of our business?"

"Yes," Harry nodded. "I would."

Harry took several slow steps towards the trunk, and peered inside for several seconds before collapsing in laughter.

"What is it Harry?" Tonks asked in concern.

"A prankster to the end," Harry managed to control his laughter. "Sirius filled this box with several lewd how to manuals, including The Wizard's Kama Sutra, Potions to make you Potent, So you've married a Kinky Girl that can change her appearance, and How to Manage a Group marriage. Along with that there are several potions, five gallons of lubricant and for some strange reason several dozen feather dusters."

"Oh," Tonks giggled. "I guess he wanted to do something to cheer you up from beyond the grave."

"Yeah," the rapidly paling Remus agreed. "Heh, heh, what a kidder. Well, I think it's time we be going."

"We still have to deal with a bit of paperwork in regards to Mr. Potter's birthday." The goblin reminded them,

"Oh," Remus started to relax. "Paperwork, for a moment there I was afraid that it was about . . . nothing important, never mind."

"Good," the Goblin nodded. "Then I shall procede."

"You do that," Remus agreed.

"I shall," the Goblin nodded again.

"You do . . ."

"Can we just get on with this," Harry interrupted.

"Yes, well." The Goblin cleared his throat, "we just need to know if you've set a wedding date or dates so we can inform the Ministry that things have been settled."

"What?"

"We just need to know if you've decided on a date or dates for your wedding or weddings," the Goblin repeated himself. "The Ministry dislikes it when you forget to inform them, and if you haven't decided on a date or dates then you really must. Forgive me for saying so, but procrastination is not an admirable trait and you really must set a date or dates soon."

"What wedding?" Harry shouted, "I'm not engaged."

"Yes you are Mr. Potter," the Goblin held up a sheet of paper. "In fact, I have here a list of your fiancées."

"List, fiancées?" Harry repeated dumbly.

"Yes, a rather long one too." The Goblin agreed, "I take it you weren't told then?"

"Sit down Remus," Harry said in an overly calm voice. "I really need someone to tell me what's going on and you can't do that if you manage to escape."

The werewolf's shoulders dropped as he walked away from the exit and back to his chair.

"May I see the list?" Harry asked the Goblin.

"Of course." The Goblin handed over the list, a bit intimidated by the look in his client's eye.

"Tonks?" Harry glanced over at the Auror, "why am I engaged to Tonks?"

"I believe it's to settle the matter of the Black family succession sir," the Goblin replied. "As the only unmarried female in the extended Black family she is the natural choice, unless of course you'd prefer us to get Draco Malfoy?"

"Malfoy isn't a female," Harry paused for a moment in shock as an idea came to the forefront of his mind. "Is he?"

"I don't believe so sir," the Goblin gave a toothy smile. "But you'll find that Goblin magic won't have a problem surmounting such a minor difficulty."

"Tonks is fine," Harry said quickly. "I don't want to even think about Malfoy that way."

"If you wish sir," the Goblin shrugged.

"What?" Harry stared in shock at the next name on the list, "I'm engaged to Hermione? How in the hell did that happen, her family's not even magic?"

"Well," Remus gave a weak grin. "Your father wanted to celebrate after you were born, and I'm afraid that he escaped some time after the four of us got kicked out of our fifth bar . . ."

"And?" Harry's voice was beginning to get shrill.

"We eventually found him drinking with a dentist in a muggle bar." Remus explained, "It all started when . . ."

"I'm the luckiest guy in the world," James slurred drunkenly. "Ma wife just gave birth to a beautiful baby boy."

"Congradu . . . con . . . good on you," his drinking companion replied. "Ma wife 's gonna do da same thing soon."

"Great," James smiled. "If you have a girl, let's engage 'em."

"I don't think my wife would approve," the other man protested as he started to become dangerously sober.

"I'll buy the next round," James offered.

"Well . . . ok, what the hell." The man nodded enthusiastically, "not like she'll ever find out anyway."

"That's the spirit." James agreed, keeping your wife in the dark about her daughter's marriage would be a great prank.

"And that's what happened," Remus finished.

"That's, I mean, I." Harry's eye caught the next name on the list, "The HolyHead Harpys? HOW IN THE HELL AM I ENGAGED TO A QUIDDICH TEAM?"

"An all female quiddich team," Remus added helpfully.

"ReeeeMussss," Harry was starting to turn purple.

"Well," Remus chuckled nervously. "It's a funny story, you see your father's team was playing the Harpys and Sirius got into an argument with their team captain and bet them that if they lost to James's team then the entire team would be engaged to you."

It was at that point that Harry started foaming at the mouth.

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AN: A short fic making fun of all those fics where Harry finds out that he is arranged to marry on or more girls. Some of them are great reads and some of them aren't and this is my take on the idea.

The basic Idea is that Harry is engaged to marry half the witches in Hogwarts, James got drunk and arranged several marriages, Sirius did the same, Remus has to have done a couple, Peter also, and maybe Dumbledore. And I wouldn't be surprised to see that a Fudge sponsored contest that nets a few more girls or maybe he sold engagements to raise campaign funds.

## The Last Straw

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"THAT IS IT," Harry stalked over to where Draco was tormenting a couple of first years and grabbed the other boy's shoulder. "Malfoy, if I see you doing that again then I'm going to break something of yours."

"Mister Potter," McGonagall had arrived. "What do you think you're doing?"

"Explaining the facts of life to Draco here," Harry tightened his grip on the other boy's shoulder. "I told him that I would hurt him severely if I found him tormenting another first year, or anyone else for that matter."

"There will be no fighting in this school Mr. Potter," McGonagall looked stern. "If Mr. Malfoy was misbehaving. Next time tell a teacher and they will handle it."

"Are you willing to swear a wizard's oath, or in your case a witch's oath on that?" Harry gave an annoyed grin.

"What?" McGonagall looked ready to explode. "Why would you ask for such a thing."

"It's just . . . well, no teacher has ever bothered to punish him or make any attempts to curb his behavior before." Harry shrugged, "permit me to be a bit sceptical that you would start now."

"WHAT?" Minerva was stunned, "why would you say something like that."

"I am sick and tired of the fact that you can get away with anything in this school if your name is Malfoy," Harry's face was red with rage. "From now on the teachers can go to hell if they think they can tell me what to do, you wanna expel me? Fine, I'm sure that there are a dozen other magical schools that would be thrilled to have 'the famous Harry Potter' as one of their students."

"If you think you can . . ."

"Do your job?" Harry interrupted, "I don't know. You aren't doing it, Snape sure as hell ain't doing it. So why not me?"

"Go to the Headmaster's office immediately," McGonagall was purpling with rage. "Maybe he can talk some sense into you."

"Maybe he could do his job too," Harry retorted. "Instead of covering for Snape or making my life a living hell."

"If you think you can talk to me that . . ."

"This conversation is over," Harry interrupted. "I doubt that you have anything intelligent to add, and with my new duties I don't have the time to waste on idle chit chat."

"Harry why . . ."

"Remember what I said Malfoy," Harry ignored his head of house. "Unless you want to get to know the hospital wing as well as I do . . . remember what I said."

With that last comment, Harry turned and stalked down the hallway.

"I'll just be going then," Draco smiled weakly and began walking in the opposite direction.

"Not so fast Mr. Malfoy," Minerva's sharp voice force the boy. "I have some things I want to discuss with you."

"Yes Professor?" The blond tried to smile innocently.

"What were you doing with those first years?"

"I was just showing them to their class rooms," Draco smiled. "I didn't want them to get lost."

"Is that true?" McGonagall Turned to the two first years.

"No Professor," the first years shook their heads. "He was saying that the dark lord would kill our families"

"What?" Draco's face turned red, "just you wait. I'm gonna . . ."

"Have Harry beat you up if you try anything," one of the first years interrupted. "You can't do anything to us anymore."

"What did you mean anymore," McGonagall didn't like the implications.

"It doesn't matter if Snape covers for him anymore," the first year smiled. "Harry will get him anyway."

"I see," McGonagall was not happy with the way the conversation was going. "Thank you, you may go. Have your Professor see me if you're late for class."

"Thank you Professor," the two first years rushed off.

"As for you," McGonagall glared at Malfoy. "You're coming with me."

"Shouldn't you get my Head of House?" Malfoy asked nervously.

"That's another week of detention for questioning a Professor," McGonagall replied calmly. "Assuming I don't get you expelled."

"You can't do this," Draco was shocked at the course of events. "My father's on the board of governors."

"I am the Deputy Headmistress," McGonagall frowned. "And as such I have the ability to give punishments to students, three more months detention."

"We'll see about this," Draco sulked.

"Keep it up Mr. Malfoy," Minerva smiled. "And I'll run out of time this year and have to start on the next."

Draco finally started showing the cunning attributed to his House and chose not to reply to the Professor's comments.

"Good day Mr. Malfoy," Minerva turned and began to walk away. "I'll expect to see you in detention tonight, I'm sure the grounds keeper has several unpleasant tasks for you to perform."



The Professor made her way to the Headmaster's office and framed him with a worried stare.

"What is it Minerva?" Dumbledore smiled.

"We have a problem."

"What is it?" Dumbledore tossed another lemon drop in his mouth.

"Harry no longer respects us," Minerva frowned. "I caught him threatening Mr. Malfoy in the hall."

"I'll speak with him," Dumbledore promised. "I'm sure that we can have everything wrapped up by dinner."

"You don't understand, I told him to see you and he refused." McGonagall looked worried, "He said that if we're unwilling to do our jobs then he's going to do them for us."

"I can't believe that it's gotten that bad," Dumbledore smiled. "I'm sure that he'll cool off if we give him enough time."

"You're living in a fantasy world if you believe that Albus," Minerva shook her head sadly. "I talked to a couple of first years and they said that they weren't afraid to speak out now that Harry is going to protect them, they said that Harry won't care about the protection that Severus gives to his house."

"They said that?" Dumbledore looked shocked.

"They don't have any confidence that we'll protect them," Minerva agreed. "They seem to think that you can do anything you want in this school so long as your name is Malfoy, an attitude that Mr. Malfoy seemed to share."

Let's do the Time Warp Again

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Harry's eyes cracked open and he took in his surroundings with a glance. For a few moments, he stared in shocked incomprehension as his mind refused to believe what his eyes were seeing. The last thing he remembered was sitting in Potions class and then . . . something strange had happened.

"What in the hell am I doing back in the cupboard?" Harry muttered to himself, "and what in the hell am I doing in this godforsaken place?"

"Shut your mouth boy," the door opened and his Uncle's purple face filled doorway. "You had better remain silent and think about all the sacrifices your aunt and I have made so that you could live here."

"Only taking in triple the amount of calories needed to sustain a full grown whale?" Harry smirked, "now why don't you explain why I'm here."

"Why you're here?" Vernon looked like he was going to explode, "you're here because there are laws that say we can't throw you into the bloody street."

"You don't have the guts to throw out," Harry was starting to get angry. "You fat dumb piece of penguin excitement."

"Grwaaaaaaa," Vernon grabbed his nephew by the arm and marched towards the door. "Don't have the guts do I? Get out and never come back."

Harry flew out the door and landed painfully on the front walk, standing to dust himself off he took one last look at the front door.

"Guess I was wrong," Harry's tone turned thoughtful. "Guess he did have the guts after all."

Taking a look at himself for the first time since awakening in the cupboard, Harry was surprised to see that he had apparently regressed into a younger body.

"Now why didn't that dumb bastard notice?" Harry began walking down the street, "and where in the hell are my things?"

Shrugging his shoulders, Harry continued his walk to the park as he silently wondered what had caused him to go on this latest adventure.

"What are you doing out all alone at this time of night?"

Harry jumped at the voice behind him, "nothing officer."

"What's your name?"

"I don't think I should say," Harry bit his lower lip.

"Why aren't you at home?" The police man questioned, "you can't be more than five or six years old."

"I've just been thrown out." Harry had an evil idea, if he was going to be in his younger body then he might as well have fun with it. "My uncle said that I was lucky that he took in a worthless brat like me in the first place and that the law wouldn't do anything to help me."

"He did, did he?" The Police man frowned, "where is your uncle?"

"I don't want to be any trouble," Harry hid his smirk. "I'll just go live in the park, my uncle said that houses are too good to be sullied by my presence."

"Why don't you come with me," the Police man fought hard to keep all signs of rage off his face. "And I'll get you some food."

"I already ate yesterday sir," Harry replied politely. "So it would be a waste to feed me until tomorrow."

"Let me worry about that," the Law Enforcement Officer replied kindly. "You just worry about getting enough to eat."

The Officer lifted Harry up and placed him in the passenger seat of his squad car, "you and I are going to take a ride to the station."

"Can we turn on the siren?" Harry's eyes lit up, it was something he had always wanted to do.

"If you want," the Officer nodded. "Now why don't you tell me about this uncle of yours?"

"He's really big," Harry began. "And his face turns purple when he's angry at me."

"Does he get angry at you often?" The Officer asked as he pulled away from the curb.

"Not very often," Harry shook his head. "Only a few times a day."

"I see . . . does," the Officer took a breath. "Does he ever hit you?"

"I'm not suppose to say," Harry allowed his voice to fall to a whisper. "Uncle Vernon will get angry."

"If you tell me," the Officer gave a warm smile. "I'll show you which button turns the siren on."

"Sometimes," Harry nodded slowly. "But only because he needs to beat 'it' out of me."

"Beat what out of you?" His grip on the wheel tightened.

"I don't know," Harry managed to force out a tear. "But it must be very bad."

"Hit this button here," the officer indicated a button. "It'll turn on the lights and siren."

"Ok," Harry hit the button and was rewarded by a loud whine and flashing lights. "Are you going to hit me now?"

"Why would I hit you?" The Officer knew that he wasn't going to like the answer.

"Because my Uncle says that nothing good can happen to me without a good beating afterwards," Harry forced himself to shiver. "He said that it'll keep me from getting my hopes up."

"Well, I'm not going to hit you for any reason." The Officer replied firmly, "I forgot to mention but my name is Officer Patrick Jones. Why don't you tell me your name?"

"My Uncle usually calls me boy or you," Harry replied. "But my name is Harry."

"Well Harry," the car pulled into a parking space. "We're at the Police station, why don't we go in and I'll give you that food I promised you."

"Ok," Harry nodded.

Officer Jones took Harry into the station house and set him at a desk with a box of doughnuts and a large cup of tea.

"I have to go talk to some people so I won't be here for a little while," the Officer made sure to give a wide grin. "But I'll be back, and when I come back I want to see that you've eaten as many of these doughnuts as you can. Ok Harry?"

"Ok Officer Jones," Harry nodded.

Harry was on his third doughnut when he noticed the newspaper, figuring that he would look to see if there were any signs of Death Eater activity. Opening the paper, he nearly dropped his doughnut when he noticed the date . . . he still had five years before he could go to Hogwarts.

I have two choices, Harry mused to himself as he took another bite of doughnut. I can try to contact Dumbledore to get back to my own time, or I can stay here and try to set things right . . . and make Vernon's life hell of course.

"Hello," a female police officer had managed to walk into the room without being noticed.

Harry looked up from his newspaper in shock, "hi."

"Do you like looking at the newspaper?" She knelt beside Harry's chair and shot him a warm grin.

"I'm sorry," Harry flinched. "I know I'm not supposed to, I'm sorry."

"No one is angry," the woman's voice was soft and soothing. "It's ok to look at the newspaper if you want to."

"Really?" Harry figured that he was overacting a bit, but why mess with what seemed to be working.

"Really," she nodded. "It's very interesting isn't it?"

"Yes," Harry nodded. "But I can't read it yet, just some of the words."

"That's very good," the woman smiled. "I'm Sergeant Samantha, I'm a friend of Officer Patrick."

"I'm Harry Potter," Harry smiled. "Pleased to meet you."

"Those clothes don't look very comfortable," the woman shook her head. "For one thing, they're too big for you."

"I don't have anything else," Harry allowed his shoulders to drop. "I'm sorry."

"It's ok," Sergeant Samantha patted him on the shoulder. "Would you like some new clothes?"

"Ok," Harry nodded. "But are you sure you want to waste the money?"

"It's not a waste to get you new clothes Harry," she assured him. "In fact, I can't think of a better way to spend department funds."

"If you're sure," Harry fought the urge to laugh. "But my Uncle says that I should be Happy to get Dudley's old things and my Aunt agrees with him, she says that a worthless boy like me should be happy for what I get."

"Well I disagree." She had to force herself not to frown, child neglect cases always got to her. "I'll have some new clothes for you in just a second."

The Policewoman left the room and returned a few minutes later carrying a box of clothing, "why don't you change out of those clothes and into these ones?"

"Will you wait outside?" Harry turned red. "I don't want to do it with you watching me."

"I'll be right outside if you need me," the policewoman agreed. "Just knock on the door."

"Ok," Harry gave struggled pitifully with his shirt for a few moments before conceding defeat, looked like Vernon's throw might have broken something. Walking toward the door with a sigh, Harry knocked.

"Yes?" Sergeant Samantha knelt down and smiled.

"I can't get my shirt off," Harry admitted. "Could you help me, but only with that?"

"Sure I can," the Policewoman winced she saw the line of scar, the bruises, and the half healed cuts that covered the boy's chest and back. "Harry, could you tell me how all this happened?"

"I'm not supposed to say," Harry frowned.

"That's ok," Sergeant Samantha smiled. "But I'm going to have to call my friend in to look at all this, he's a Paramedic and he'll help you."

"Ok," Harry nodded.

The woman stepped outside the door for a moment and called in a Paramedic. "Harry, this is my friend Nigel. He's a Paramedic, that means that he rides around in an ambulance."

"Hello Harry," Nigel smiled.

"Hello Nigel," Harry smiled back.

The man spent several minutes checking over and bandaging Harry's injuries before he would allow Harry to resume changing.

"Thanks for being so patient Harry," Nigel smiled. "Sergeant Samantha and I will give you some privacy so that you can get back to changing."

"I do have to ask one thing before I go," Sergeant Samantha smiled. "What's your address?"

"Why?" Harry's eyes narrowed.

"So we can drop off your old clothes," Sergeant Samantha answered with a straight face.

"Oh," Harry couldn't believe that they expected him to fall for such a lame trick. "It's number 4 Privet Drive."

"Thank you Harry," Sergeant Samantha smiled. "You've been a lot of help."

Sergeant Samantha took Nigel by the arm and the two of them stepped out into the hallway.

"Well?" She forced herself to keep her voice down to keep the boy from overhearing.

"I found signs consistent with neglect and abuse," Nigel confirmed. "One of the bruises on his arm looked like it had been caused by a large hand gripping it to tight."

"That's all I needed to hear," Sergeant Samantha gave a cold smile. "Jones, go talk to the people at Number 4 Privet Drive."

"On it," the Officer nodded. "I have a feeling that this one might resist arrest so . . ."

"Be sure to bring a lot of back up," the woman nodded. "I think you're right about this one resisting arrest."

Three hours later, a badly beaten Vernon Dursley was escorted into the Police Station by several large humorless officers.

"Toss him in cell three," Sergeant Samantha ordered coldly.



"Isn't that the one with the biker gang?"

"Your point is?"

"Just asking," the Officer shrugged. "Wanted to make sure I didn't put him somewhere else by mistake."

"Get to it," the Sergeant smiled. "I want his stay to be memorable."

It wasn't until the next day that Dumbledore managed to track down the whereabouts of Harry and his relatives. He had been awoken early the previous morning by a frantic Ms. Figg, and had spent the intervening time searching.

"Can I help you?" The Desk Sergeant greeted the old man with a frown, "I'm looking for Harry Potter and Vernon Dursley."

"Why?"

In the end, it had taken the Headmaster several hours and several memory charms before he managed to get things the way they were supposed to be. Over their protests, he had placed Harry back with his relatives and insured their cooperation with several threats.

Wonder why he didn't bother wiping our memories, Harry mused to himself. Guess it doesn't really matter, I wonder what I should do to Vernon tomorrow.

IIIIIIIIII

"Hello sir," Harry walked up to the front desk in a police station.

"Hello lad," the Desk Sargent smiled. "What can I do for you?"

"My uncle told me to go out and give a group of lonely men a good time for some money," Harry frowned. "And he said to avoid the stupid pigs because they'd just ruin everything."

"Really?" The Policeman fought to remain calm. "Did he say anything else."

"No sir," Harry shook his head. "But I lost the address and I can't find the lonely men so I decided to come here to ask you, they told us in school that you can always trust a policeman because they're smart and good and I thought you could also protect me from the nasty pigs."

"Why don't you have a seat lad," the Policeman gave a warm smile. "And have a cup of tea, what did you say your uncle's name was again?"

It took several hours, but the Headmaster managed wipe the memories of every official involved and have Harry and his relatives back home before midnight.

The next day, Harry's relatives refused to let him out of the house so Harry phoned in an anonymous tip that the Dursleys were selling drugs right before he was to be locked in his cupboard. It seemed that the headmaster's efforts were only successful in wiping the physical records that Vernon had been arrested several times, the new electronic records remained untouched and the Department was eager to finally get a chance to pin something on the man that had apparently managed to dodge several arrests.

The Police that raided the house were shocked and disgusted to find a young boy locked under the stairs rather than the drugs that they expected to find, but in the end it resulted in another charge of resisting arrest for Vernon and another sleepless night of memory modification for the Dumbledore.

"Why don't you take the second bedroom?" Vernon suggested nervously the second he spotted his nephew, "that way you have more space."

"Ok," Harry shrugged. Looked like his relatives could be trained after all.

Harry awoke early the next morning and removed the money needed to pay for his trip to London from his uncle's wallet.

It did not take long to find the entrance to the wizarding world and all he had to do to gain entrance to the alley was bat his eyes and look cute.

His first stop was to the Wizarding bank to make a withdrawal.

"Key please," the Goblin frowned down from behind his desk.

"I don't have it," Harry replied. "But I suppose that there is some way that you can get it for me?"

"Place your hand on the desk," the goblin replied in a board tone. "It will sample your blood and determine if you are telling the truth about having a vault."

"And if I'm not?"

"Then your parents will be contacted," the Goblin continued in his board tone.

"Oh," Harry shrugged and placed his hand on the desk. "I thought you'd lock me up or something."

"Not until you're older," the Goblin frowned down at something. "Confirmed, how much do you want to withdraw?"

"Is there a limit?" Harry asked quietly.

"No," the Goblin shook his head.

"Then as much as you think I need for a lot of shopping and a bit leftover," Harry shrugged. "And I suspect that I'm going to make at least one very large purchase."

"Have a big sack 'o gold then," the Goblin handed over a big sack 'o gold. "And don't spend it all in one place."

"Ok," Harry nodded. It looked like Goblins treated children differently . . . or he just had a weird one.

Harry's first stop was a shop that advertised used wands.

"Aren't you a little young to be here?" The shopkeeper smirked as he looked down at Harry.

"No I'm not," Harry frowned. "I was brewing up a potion and I must have done something wrong because now I look like this and I can't find my wand."

"Oh," the clerk's condescending smirk turned into a look of sympathy. "What did they say a St. Mungos?"

"I'll start looking like myself again if I give it enough time," Harry smiled at the half truth. "But until that happens, I need a new wand."

"Of course," the clerk nodded. "Come with me."

Harry followed the man to a large shelf at the back of the store.

"We don't have many," the man indicated a small selection of wands. "But here they are, pick any one you want."

"Aren't I suppose to wave it and get sparks or something?" This was nothing like the first time.

"Haven't done it since first year huh," the man shook his head. "Won't be as good as your first wand, but it's better than nothing."

"I suppose," Harry selected the only wand that he could grip comfortably. "Thanks."

"No problem," the shopkeeper nodded. "I've had experience with bad changes myself."

"It isn't fun," Harry frowned.

"Speaking of which," the shopkeeper saw the potential for another sale. "I might have something to help you with your ahem little problem."

"What?"

"It's a small device that allow you to look like another person, down to hight and weight." The shopkeeper smiled, "granted you won't look like yourself."

"But I won't look like this either," Harry finished. "I'll take it."

"Excellent, let me just bag up your purchases."

The first thing that Harry did upon exiting the store was to activate the strange item he had bought to make himself look a few years older, the second thing he did was to test out his new wand with a few simple charms.

Harry made three more stops before returning to his relatives house. The first was to buy a new trunk with a self shrinking charm, and the second was to get a bunch of cool things that will appear if I think they'll be funny or enhance the story line and it might be a good idea to assume that he got some candy and food too. And the last stop was to buy some new books, because what fic is complete without buying a bunch of new books.

Harry spent several hours browsing the book store and managed to fill several everlite baskets with an assortment of books.

"What can I do for you lad?" The man behind the counter asked with a knowing grin.

"Err, I'd like to buy these and I'd also like to get a copy of Hogwarts a History," Harry managed a weak smile. "If that's not too much trouble?"

"No trouble at all," the man winked as he reached under the counter. "Here you are . . . Hogwarts a History, hope you enjoy it as much as I do."

"Um," Harry was getting a bit confused at the man's attitude. "Thanks."

"Don't mention it," the man chuckled. "I remember what it's like to be your age."

Harry paid for the book and caught the knight bus back to his relatives' house. Taking care not to make any noise, Harry managed to get up the stairs and into his room before the Dursley's noticed his presence.

"Well," Harry muttered to himself. "Time to see what Hermione finds so fascinating about this book."

Harry settled down and began to read, the first few pages were rather boring, giving an overview of the house structure. The next few hundred pages weren't so bad as they mainly covered with the formation of the castle and it was interesting to see what spells and wards were used into the construction. After that, after that it started to get weird.

"I never knew that Hogwarts a History had things like this," Harry turned the book sideways to get a better look at the centerfold. After several minutes of admiration, Harry turned to the next page. "How to drive any woman wild in bed?" Unable to turn away, Harry read that section, and the next, and the next.

By the end of the night, Harry's face was so red that it would have been hard to convince an outside observer that it could have ever been another shade.

"And this is Hermione's favorite book?" Harry turned the book sideways to admire another centerfold, "guess I don't know her as well as I thought I did . . . I wonder if Ron knows about this."

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AN: I had the Hogwarts a History idea and I had the idea of doing a fic where Harry went back in time and tormented his relatives, so I decided to combine them. I might do a separate one of these just for the Hermione scene to turn it into it's own fic, I'm not sure.

## Old Soldiers Never Die

### Part 01 - Harry's Hand Cannon.

---

"What're ya doing boy?" Vernon asked with a hint of honest curiosity.

"There are some people I need to kill," Harry's eyes flashed dangerously. "I'm studying to kill them."

"What sort of people?" Vernon blinked, "normal people or your sort?"

"My sort," Harry snorted.

"Wait right here," Vernon rushed off and returned a few minutes later with a small wooden box. "Here boy, take this."

"What is it?" Harry asked opening the box cautiously.

"It's the pistol your grand father carried in the War," Vernon replied quietly. "And around the world before that."

"What," Harry looked down at the big revolver. "Why did you give this to me?"

"Your grandfather was an officer in the Army," Vernon ignored the question. "And did some important work with the Special Air Services after the war, he finally retired in the nineteen fifty's as a Major. He kept his old pistol and gave it to Petunia when he passed away, I was going to give it to Dudley but . . . but I think you'd be able to put it to better use."

"Thank you," Harry was astounded. Never before had any of his 'family' given him anything of substance, "but . . . but why?"

"Petunia would have thrown a fit if she knew we still had that," Vernon shrugged. "And like I said, I think you'd be able to put it to good use."

"I . . . thank you"

"Don't thank me until I tell you the rest," Vernon frowned. "I hate freaks, I can't abide the idea of waving a wand to get around doing a bit of honest work. You say you're going to kill some freaks then you have my blessing . . . just don't let any live that you could have killed, kill them all if you can."

"What?" Harry's eyes widened.

"I'm not expecting you to kill your friends," Vernon gave a cruel smirk. "Just the ones you set out for in the first place, don't show any mercy, don't let a single one survive that you could have killed. If it makes you feel any better, tell yourself that it insures that they can never hurt another person again."

"I . . ."

"Think about it boy," Vernon started walking out of the room. "And take the day off to do it, the yard can wait and I want you do consider what I said very carefully."

Harry spent the day mulling over his uncle's words, on the one hand he was reluctant to become a cold blooded killer, and on the other . . . on the other, he was sure that he wasn't going to win by using tickling charms.

Decision made, Harry opened his door and walked down to meet his uncle.

"Uncle Vernon," Harry called out to get the man's attention.

"It'd better be good boy," the fat man tore his gaze from the television.

"I'll do it," Harry nodded. "But I'll need you to allow a few things."

"Like what?" The fat man's piggy eyes narrowed.

"I'm going to need to order a few books," Harry began. "And I might need to brew a potion or two."

"And this'll help you kill more freaks?" The fat man asked eagerly.



"Yes," Harry nodded. "It will allow me to kill many more than I would have been able to otherwise."

"Then you have my permission," Vernon nodded. "You're also excused from yard work, I want you to spend as much time as you need to on this."

"Than you," Harry turned away and started walking up the stairs.

"Might also be a good idea to start working with Dudley," Vernon called out. "Learning a bit of boxing might be just the edge you'll need to kill one more before they manage to bring you down."

"Thank you uncle," Harry gave a cold smile. "I look forward to learning all I can."

Harry returned to his room and spent the next several minutes writing a letter to Flourish and Blotts, taking care not to mention anything that might not be appropriate for a young boy to ask. He had suspicions that Dumbledore might be monitoring his mail and even if he wasn't why take the chance of giving information to an unknown.

*To whom it may concern,*

*I have recently seen mention of an odd muggle device called a gon or perhaps gun. I was hoping that you would be willing to sell me any books you might have that talk about this subject. I would be particularly interested in any books that deal with past enchantments of this odd device though I doubt that it's important enough that any wizard would bother wasting the time on one.*

*Sincerely,*

*Harry James Potter.*

Harry looked down at the note with a sense of satisfaction, with luck they wouldn't even know what he was talking about.

"I got a letter for you girl," Harry opened the cage and spent several moments stroking his pet. "Would you be willing to deliver it for me?"

"Hoot," Hedwig bobbed her head and offered her leg.

"It's to Flourish and Blotts in Diagon Alley," Harry tied on the letter.  
"Have a good flight."

Hedwig returned about an hour later with a strange package clutched in her talons.

"Thanks girl," Harry took the package. "I was starting to get worried about you."

Hedwig gave him a flat stare.

"Two hours may be fast for a normal owl," Harry smiled. "But you're an exceedingly clever owl and I didn't think that you'd be slowed down by a package."

Hedwig seemed to consider his words for a moment, then bobbing her head she returned to her perch and went to sleep.

Harry tore open the envelope that came attached to the package and began to read.

*Dear Mr. Potter,*

*You were correct when you supposed that the gon was too obscure to write about. I have forwarded the only book in stock that I was able to find on gons and I beg you take it without worrying about the charge. The book looks as if it has sat in my inventory for many years and upon further investigation I was able to learn that it was written by a squib and as such must not be of any value or importance.*

The rest of the letter continued on in that vein and Harry tossed it aside, he had finally found a way to protect himself without getting expelled and he wasn't going to waste a moment.

*Modern Arms*

*by Sergeant Major Nigel Smythe British Army ret.*

Harry opened the cover and was immediately stunned by his good fortune. The first chapter was entitled 'Simple Potions for Maintenance.' A cursory glance revealed that most of the potions could be brewed by a first year with very few magical ingredients.

Over the next week, Harry brewed several potions. The first was a simple cleaning potion that removed caked oil and dirt. The second was a potion that strengthened the frame. The third potion restored Harry's ammunition to a like new condition. And the fourth insured that he would never lose his new weapon against the dark.

Harry carefully propped up his book and checked to make sure that his pistol was unloaded as the book had suggested he do every time he picked it up. Copying the firing stance illustrated in the book, Harry spent several minutes cocking and firing his revolver at imaginary targets.

"I have a surprise for you the next time we meet Tom," Harry smiled. "A very big surprise."

"Open up boy," Vernon pounded on the door. "Looks like some freaks are bothering the people in the house across the street."

"What are they dressed in?" Harry broke open his pistol and began feeding the fat cartridges into it.

"Black with white masks," Vernon glanced at his suddenly dangerous nephew.

"Just making sure," Harry closed the action and put a handful of the precious cartridges in his pocket. "I might be late for dinner."

"I'll be sure to save something for you," Vernon gave a sadistic smile. "Give 'em hell boy."

"Stay inside," Harry shoved the pistol in his belt and headed for the front door. "I think you'll be safe here."

Harry crept out the front door and immediately became aware of half an Order guard's whispered call for help.

Ignoring the man, Harry fixed his eyes on the group terrorising the people across the street and nearly fainted in relief. For one thing, there couldn't be more than four of them. For another, there didn't appear to be any inner circle members. It looked like a group of new recruits had come to his neighborhood by chance, Harry was going to make sure they didn't survive such a fatal mistake.

Pulling the heavy pistol out of his belt, Harry concealed it behind his leg and approached the group at a fast walk.

"What do we have here?" One of the death eaters noticed as Harry came within a few feet. "Another vic . . ."

Harry raised the revolver and put a bullet into the man's throat, silencing him forever. Two of the other death eaters stared down at their bleeding comrade with identical looks of shock, this wasn't the way things were supposed to happen, people weren't supposed to fight back, no one was supposed to get hurt . . . well, no one of importance.

The third death eater whipped his wand out and shot two quick curses, Harry retaliated by showing once again that accuracy was more important than speed in a gunfight by putting his next bullet in the man's chest.

"Oh g . . ." Harry's third bullet shattered the man's jaw and his fourth entered right below the left eye.

The last death eater raised his wand with a trembling hand and died as Harry's fifth and final bullet entered the man's chest and shredded his heart.

From start to finish, the fight had been over in less than six seconds.

"Bloody hell," Harry spun to engage the man behind him. "IT'S ME, I'M ORDER I'M ORDER."

Harry shoved the pistol back into his belt and clenched his hands to stop their shaking.

"Is help going to come soon?" Harry asked after he managed to suppress his stomach's desire to empty itself.

"Y . . . yes," the man removed his invisibility cloak and stared down at the death eaters in shock. "What did you do to them?"

"The same thing they would have done to me," Harry replied evenly. "Only I didn't prolong it as much as they would have."

"Bloody hell," the man repeated himself. "I don't . . ."

"Are you alright Harry?" Dumbledore called out, the Order had arrived.

"I'm fine," Harry nodded.

"What happened to the death eaters?" The Headmaster stared down in shock.

"I killed them," Harry answered bluntly. "I don't think they were here for me though."

"How could you do something like this Harry?" Dumbledore removed one of the masks, "they're just children, not much older than you are. Why couldn't you have taken them alive?"

"Why should I take them alive?" Harry looked down at the bodies without a hint of remorse, "they would've done the same to me."

"If we had taken them alive they might have changed," Dumbledore explained. "Even if they had gotten away, we still might have been able to bring them back into the light."

"I don't care about them," Harry's temper was beginning to fray. "I'd rather think about other people."

"What other people?" The Headmaster challenged.

"The ones I've saved," Harry snarled. "Like it or not, those are four death eaters that will never hurt another person."

"You can't just go around killing people," the Headmaster tried his kindly grandfather voice. "There are more civilized ways of dealing with things."

"Like what?" Harry challenged, "waiting until they realize the error of their ways? Hoping that the great Phoenix will come and make everything better?"

A ragged cheer from one of the watchers clued Harry to the large crowd that had come to watch the confrontation, including the Minister and several reporters.

"Harry," the Headmaster began gently. "You need to control your anger, I remember another angry young wizard that came to Hogwarts a few years ago . . . I don't want you to end up like he did."

"We're through." Harry wasn't going to take it anymore. "There is no more you and me old man, we are done with each other."

"We're not finished with this conversation Harry," the Headmaster kept his normal look of serenity.

"May I have everyone's attention," Harry called out ignoring the headmaster. "I'm ready to give my statement."

Reporters and ministry officials flocked to hear his word. Reporters clutched their quills and Fudge stood proudly at his shoulder.

"I killed several people today," Harry began. "But since they were all death eaters, well . . . let's just say that I'm not going to lose any sleep over it. I've been fighting Voldemort since I entered the wizarding world and so far as I'm concerned this is just the latest in a long series of skirmishes."

"Mr. Potter," one of the reporters waved his hands to get attention. "What are your plans now?"

"My plans," Harry smiled. "Are to leave the wizarding world, the last year has shown me what you truly think of me . . . an attention seeking boy is what your paper called me isn't it? From now on the wizarding world can rot for all I care, so long as Voldemort leaves me

alone then I have no reason to take an active role in his defeat . . . if you want my help, then you'll have to pay me quite a bit for it."

"You can't be serious," one of the reporters managed to do more than stare in shock. "You can't abandon us like that."

"Why not?" Harry shrugged, "you all abandoned me. So long as Voldemort leaves me alone then I will leave him alone, I would like to add that it would also be in his best interests to leave the muggle world alone."

"Why should he leave the muggles alone?" The reporter clung to his professionalism.

"Because there are more of them and they are better at killing," Harry laughed. "I suggest you look up the Manhattan Project if you doubt me."

"What is the Manhattan Project?"

"Do your job," Harry smiled. "I'm not going to do it for you."

"One last question Mr. Potter," the reporter swallowed. "Why do you think we should pay you to help us?"

"I'd be just as happy if you didn't and left me alone. But to answer your question, why in the hell should I risk my life for you for nothing? I've done it in the past and I would have been happy to be repaid with nothing, instead I received slander. I'm tired of it, Aurors risk their lives and they are well compensated. Is it so much to ask that I be given the same consideration?" Harry took a deep breath and looked around at the gathered faces. "So in summation, kill all the wizards you want, leaving the muggle world alone would be the intelligent thing to do, and if you lot of morons want my help . . . pay me."

Harry shook his head and began to walk away, he had things to pack.

"You can't do this Harry," the Headmaster grabbed him on the shoulder. "I can't let you condemn innocent people to death by your inaction."

"I learned from your example," Harry sneered. "How many people did the Order save this summer?"

"I . . ."

"None," Harry shook off the hand and began walking again.

"You can't do this to people," the Headmaster couldn't believe the way things were going.

"You think so?" Harry drew his wand.

"I know so Harry," the Headmaster allowed himself to relax.

"Watch me," Harry snapped his wand and threw the pieces on the ground.

"What have you done?" Dumbledore looked down at the remains in horror.

Ignoring the Headmaster, Harry entered the house. That fake wand was the best galleon he'd ever spent.

"What do you think you're doing?" Vernon purpled, "you're leaving the fight? You're going to let them live?"

"Didn't you listen uncle?" Harry smiled, "I told them that I'd only fight for pay."

"So you're going to get the freaks to pay you to kill more freaks?" Vernon gave a slow nod, "I think I might be proud of you . . . Harry."

"Thank you uncle," Harry nodded. "I'll be going, you might be safe here but . . ."

"But it might be a good idea to take that overseas transfer," Vernon nodded. "Goodbye boy, I doubt we'll ever see each other again."

"I'll try to remember to send newspaper clippings every time I kill some more of them," Harry smiled. "I'm afraid that they'll be my sort of newspaper though."



"Appreciate it boy," Vernon nodded. "And I'll be happy to read them, even if they are . . . your sort of paper."

Harry nodded and began walking up the stairs, he had things to pack.

The first thing that Harry did upon returning to his room was to clean and reload his revolver, the book had stressed the need to immediately clean after firing and Harry did not know enough to take the chance of delaying for a few hours. Harry made sure to take his time and get everything in the room that belonged to him and after a moment of thought he included the books that his cousin never read, waste not want not.

Dragging his heavy trunk behind, Harry walked out into the street and watched for a few seconds as the Minister of Magic was mobbed by reporters, all demanding to know what he had done to drive the savior of the wizarding world away. Turning his head, he watched for a few more seconds as the Order gathered around the Headmaster like a group of sheep seeking comfort from the storm.

Shaking his head, Harry began dragging his heavy trunk up the street, he wasn't going to stay here a moment longer then he had to.

"Hello Harry," Rita had noticed the young hero's return and she had no intention of passing up the chance to get a better story. "Care to answer a few questions for me?"

"Which newspaper?" Harry didn't bother to look at the woman, he was past the point of caring about niceties.

"I'm still at the Quibbler," Rita answered quickly.

"On a few conditions," Harry nodded. "You only send this to the Quibbler, if they want more then they go through the Lovegoods. You report what I say accurately, one embellishment and I'll never give you so much as the time of day after this. And finally, you cast a featherlight charm on my trunk."

"A featherlight charm?"

"It's heavy and I don't like having to move it," Harry replied quickly. "Well?"

"Yes," Rita nodded. "Of course, I'll agree to your conditions."

"Good," Harry smiled. "You have until I decide to summon the Knight Bus . . . I'll need to ask you to use your wand for that."

"Why?"

"I'm sure a reporter as skilled as yourself will manage to figure it out," Harry smirked. "First question."

"Could we get around this corner first?" Rita looked back nervously, "I'd rather not have to share you with the other reporters."

"As you like," Harry nodded. "About that featherlight charm . . ."

"Of course," Rita quickly cast the charm. "May I ask what your plans are now?"

"Now?" Harry paused for a moment, "I'm going to find a place to live and have a quiet life."

"You mentioned that you'd be willing to fight for pay?" Rita had a parchment out and was frantically writing, "how much?"

"That all depends on the Minister," Harry smiled. "I won't even be able to do it unless he gives the ok and grants me a few things."

"Like what?" Rita's eyes gleamed, she loved making people's lives difficult and she was sure that Harry's answer would make the Minister's life very difficult.

"Well," Harry smiled. "Off the top of my head . . . immunity from the underage restrictions for me and anyone that I chose, immunity from prosecution for myself and anyone I chose, and access to the Ministry's archives and resources."

"Why did you add immunity from prosecution?" Rita looked up from her notes.

"The Minister tried to punish me for self defence last year," Harry waved his hand in the direction of the park. "I protected myself and my cousin from several dementers, and I was charged and tried for it. I don't trust the Ministry and I've lost faith in everyone else . . . summon the Knight Bus please."

"Right away," Rita held up her wand and the Knight Bus appeared with a bang. "One last question, what's your response to the people who say that you're abandoning the wizarding world in it's hour of need."

Harry paused, halfway up the steps. "They abandoned me first."

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AN: My version of the 'Harry gets guns' story line. If you didn't notice, Harry did not snap his wand. He snapped a fake wand. I'm not sure how fast I'll get parts of this out, I don't have as large an outline as I usually start out with and I have a few other projects, I'll try to have something out soon.

## Old Soldiers Never Die Part 02

### The Regiment

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"Where to?" Stan eyed Harry as he stepped onto the bus.

"The Leaky Cauldron," Harry yawned as he handed over a few coins. "Wake me when we get there."

Harry walked to the back of the bus and made himself comfortable, tomorrow promised to be a very interesting day.

"We're here sir," Stan called out to wake his frightening passenger.

"Thank you," Harry stood up and walked out of the bus without a backward glance.

Every conversation ceased as Harry walked into the bar, and every eye turned to look at the famous scar on his forehead.

"Hello Tom," Harry ignored the watchers. "How are you tonight?"

"Fine," the innkeeper smiled. "You want your usual room?"

"Please," Harry nodded. "And could you send up some food? I didn't get a chance to eat today."

"Right away," Tom nodded. "It'll be up as soon as I can get it made, what would you like?"

"Give me whatever you recommend," Harry smiled. "I know you wouldn't give me anything but the best."

"Yes sir," Tom straightened up. "Here's your key sir."

"Thank you Tom," Harry took the key with a smile. "You're one of the best."

Harry walked up the stairs to his room and pulled out a piece of parchment, he had no doubt that the Minister would fall over himself

and give anything he asked for. He also knew that he was going to need to know a lot more if he was going to successfully bring his half thought out plans to life.

*Mr. Smythe*

*I have recently read your book and I was hoping that you could recommend more books on using magic with firearms.*

*Signed*

*Harry James Potter*

Harry looked at the letter, with luck the man would reply with a list of books or a place that he could get a bit of training.

Harry gave the letter to his owl and then sat down to reread one of the chapters, he had a feeling that he'd need to the information soon and he wanted to be as familiar with it as possible.

"Mr. Potter," Tom knocked on the door. "I have your dinner ready."

"Thank you Tom," Harry opened the door. "Come in."

"I made you quite a bit of food," Tom lifted the lid to reveal the dinner. "I hope you don't mind but you always look so thin and well . . ."

"It's alright Tom," Harry smiled. "I appreciate it, I'll try to eat as much as I can."

"Can I ask you a question?" Tom smiled nervously, "a man came in earlier and said you planned to leave the wizarding world."

"I'm considering it," Harry nodded. "After the last year . . . well, I'm just tired of all the slander and responsibility's."

"You'd really leave us to 'You-Know-Who?'" Tom asked nervously.

"I told the press that I'll no longer be so proactive unless I get paid," Harry held up his hand. "Preferably by the Ministry and they'll also have to grant me a few concessions, if I'm going to fight in this war then I'm going to do it my way."

"You're only interested in money?"

"No," Harry shook his head. "I don't particularly care about money, but I can't fight alone. I'll need money for resources and to pay my bills. It's only fair isn't it? Aurors and Hit-Wizards don't do their jobs for free, and normal people aren't expected to go out looking for trouble."

"I suppose that's reasonable," Tom nodded slowly.

"All I was trying to do is tell Fudge that if he wants my help then he is going to have to let me do things my way," Harry smiled. "I just did it in the only way I thought a politician would understand."

"So you're not leaving us?" Tom wanted to make one thing sure.

"Not unless Fudge makes me," Harry smiled. "You're good people, and I will protect you if the Minister lets me."

"Thank you," Tom sagged in relief. "If you'll excuse me, I gotta go downstairs and straighten a few people out."

"Goodbye Tom," Harry smiled. "I enjoyed our talk."

Tom closed the door behind him and Harry started eating. Halfway through his meal, he was interrupted by the return of his owl.

"Hello girl," Harry smiled. "How are you."

Hedwig held out her leg to present the letter she carried.

"What's this?" Harry took the letter and gave his owl a treat.

*Mr. Potter*

*I am currently in a the Regimental Association building, this is a private club located two blocks away from the Leaky Cauldron. I am available for a meeting now or at any time after five most nights, I await your reply or your presence.*

*Signed*

*Sergeant Major Smythe British Army ret.*

Harry looked at the letter in shock, never in his wildest dreams did he imagine a reply like this. Throwing on his coat and shoving his pistol in his belt, Harry ran down the steps to the bar.

"Aurors get paid for this and have Ministry support," Tom was in the middle of a conversation when Harry walked into the main room.

"I'll be out for a bit Tom," Harry called out over his shoulder. "I've got an important meeting I need to go to."

"I'll put a heating charm on your dinner," Tom called out after him as he rushed through the front door.

"Excuse me sir," Harry stopped the first man he saw. "You wouldn't happen to know where the Regimental Association building is, would you?"

"Down the street and on the left," the man pointed. "It's easy to miss, so keep your eyes open."

"Thank you," Harry ran down the street and nearly missed the building. Gasping for breath, Harry walked up to the plain door and lifted the knocker.

"Yes?" The door cracked and a pair of eyes stared out suspiciously. "What do you want?"

"I have a meeting with Sergeant Major Smythe," Harry fought to keep his face impassive. "And I'd rather not keep him waiting."

"Come in," the old man opened the door.

"Thank you," Harry's breathing returned to normal.

"Come with me," the old man motioned for him to follow. "Sergeant Major Smythe is in the smoking room."

The old man led Harry over several thick red carpets and down a hall with ornate mahogany paneling and finally ended in front of a nondescript door with a brass plate that labeled it the smoking room.

"Sergeant Major Smythe," the old man opened the door and called out. "I have a visitor for you."

"Send him in," a deep voice called back. "And send up a bottle of Laphroaig."

"Right away Sergeant Major," the man nodded.

"Come in Mr. Potter," Sergeant Major Smythe waved Harry over. "And have a seat."

"Thank you," Harry took a seat. "I have to admit that I'm a bit surprised at how fast you replied."

"And I'm a bit surprised you came at all," the Sergeant Major laughed. "Why did you want to know more about small arms?"

"Because I killed four death eaters today," Harry replied bluntly. "And I don't think I could have done it so easily without my grandfather's pistol."

"You want to know more about firearms so you can kill more of them?"

"I want to know more about firearms so I can kill them all," Harry leaned back. "I've been in this war since I was a year old, I have no desire to be in this war for any longer than I have to."

"I see," Sergeant Major Smythe nodded. "You plan to do all this by yourself?"

"If I have to," Harry nodded. "I had some friends help me a few weeks ago, I think they'd be willing to help me again."

"Children?"



"They're all I have," Harry frowned. "Most of the adults aren't willing to help, and I can't trust most of the adults that are willing to help."

"Why not?" Sergeant Major Smythe held up his hand, "I'm not arguing with you I'm asking for information."

"They work for one of two people," Harry held up two fingers. "Albus Dumbledore or Minister Fudge, I wouldn't trust Fudge to pick his own nose. Asking for his help is worse than asking for none at all."

"Your Whiskey sir," the old man from before put a bottle and a couple glasses on the table then took his leave.

"And Dumbledore?" The Sergeant Major asked quietly.

"Is so blinded by the so called 'greater good' that he doesn't care much about the little people," Harry snorted. "Unless of course they're death eaters trying to 'redeem' themselves."

"Taking a bunch of untrained school children into the fight is the same as asking for them to be killed," Smythe smiled. "Hard experience has taught me that much."

"I don't have anyone else," Harry shook his head. "I wish I did, but there's no one else that can help."

"Look around you," the old man waved his hand. "Do you know where you are?"

"In a private club," Harry nodded. "Why?"

"In a private club for Squibs," Smythe corrected. "Squibs that left their family to serve the Empire, Squibs that spent years in the Military."

"Why so many?" Harry started to smile.

"It used to be the custom to send any sons without magic into the Army to get rid of them," Smythe smiled. "It was a way to get rid of unwanted sons for many people, the wizarding world just took advantage of it."

"Do they still do it?"

"No," the old man shook his head. "The Army and the Empire have both shrunk, and the death eaters made it a priority to eliminate any squib that they could find . . . the Squib's blood was tainteddon't you know."

"No offence," Harry smiled. "But do you really think a bunch of old men can make that much of a difference?"

"Your war with Voldemort," the old NCO smiled. "Is nothing to us, at best it's a minor insurgency. We know how to fight and we know how to kill."

"And you know about the wizarding world," Harry smiled. "I told them that I wouldn't fight unless they gave me pay, and a few concisions. Would everyone really be willing to fight with me?"

"Willing to fight and follow orders," Smythe nodded.

"Why would they follow my orders?" Harry blinked, "I'm just a kid."

"They're use to their officers being half trained children," Smythe smiled. "Just leave everything to me."

"They'll really join us?" Harry still couldn't believe it, "when they could stay here and enjoy their retirement?"

"I'm almost one hundred years old," the old man smiled coldly. "I retired from the army in the late nineteen fifty's and I was lucky to stay that long, I have two grandchildren and one great granddaughter in your school. You come here and you offer me a chance to go back to the Army, you sweeten the deal by offering me a shot at the men who want to hurt my cute little great granddaughter, and you expect me to turn you down? I'd pay you for a chance to do either one, and every man here would do the same."

"Can you tell me how to get a bit of training?" Harry gave a weak smile, "I did write to you in hopes of learning to use my pistol better."

"What kind of Pistol do you have?" The old solder leaned forward.

"I don't know," Harry admitted. "I could show it to you if you like."

"I'd like," Smythe nodded.

"One moment," Harry pulled out the large pistol and broke it open to unload it. "Your book said to always unload a firearm before handing it to someone." Harry explained as he set the revolver on the table.

"Glad you paid attention," Sergeant Major Smythe nodded. "It's a Webley Mk VI, fires .455 caliber bullet, you say this was your grandfather's?"

"Yes," Harry nodded. "That's what my uncle said, he said that my grandfather was in the Army during and after the war and that he worked for something called the Special Air Service after the war."

"Sport and Social," the old man suppressed a laugh. "Do you know what his rank and name was?"

"My uncle said he was a Major," Harry licked his lips. "And he would have been named Evans, that was my mothers name."

"Evans?" The old soldier nodded, "I might have known an officer by that name. It'll help you to have had him in your family."

"Why?" Harry was a bit confused.

"Blood will tell," Smythe smirked. "Some of the men will feel better knowing that you had officers in the family, they're old and they still have the idea that the young gentleman is special."

"Oh . . . is there anything I can do to prepare?" Harry was not going to let these men down, "I'm sure the Minister will cave to my demands and I don't think it will take him much time to do it."

"First thing's first," Sargent Major Smythe stood up. "O'Henry, Jones, McLain., get over here."

"What do you need Smythe?" A man with a scar going across the bridge of his nose gave Harry a curious glance.

"What would you give me to get back into the Army?" Smythe grinned.

"Well," one of the men began. "I already gave my left hand so what do you want?"

"I'm going to give all of you a chance to reenlist," Smythe smiled. "We're forming a regiment and our young gentleman here was kind enough to offer me the post of Regimental Sergeant Major"

"We're in," the third man replied quickly. "Anything is better than spending the rest of my life rotting away here, give me a purpose again and I promise that you won't be disappointed."

"I called you over here because you all retired as senior Non Commissioned Officers, and everyone knows that good Sergeants make a good unit." Smythe smiled, "Mr. Potter has agreed to give me free hand with the enlisted men and I've decided that I want the three of you to help me get things started."

"Do we come in with our old ranks?" One of the old men asked seriously.

"That's all yet to be decided," Smythe took a sip. "Mr. Potter is still in talks with the government, but I expect that he'll be able to tell us more soon. I just wanted to give you an idea of what's happening ahead of time so you could prepare for it."

"Thank you Mr. Potter," one of the old men had tears in his eyes. "You won't regret giving us this opportunity."

"I know," Harry smiled. "You're the best the Empire produced, I'm just lucky for the chance to command you."

"To the Regiment," Smythe held up his glass.

"The Regiment," the others held up their glasses.

"You men spread the word," Smythe commanded. "I want everyone to be ready for when Mr. Potter decides to give the green light."

"So tell me Mr. Potter," Sergeant Major Smythe waited until the other men left. "What are your plans?"

"Now?" Harry exhaled. "I don't know, everything seemed so clear and now it's all moving so fast."

"Get a plan sir," Smythe looked Harry in the eye. "That's your job, you plan things and inspire the men. I take orders and make things happen."

"Ok," Harry's eyes lost focus. "There are military people that march in parades right?"

"Yes there are," Smythe agreed.

"Why don't we be those?" Harry smiled, "it would make it easier for us to carry guns wouldn't it?"

"No . . . but you might be on to something sir," Smythe nodded. "It might give us legitimacy, they might let us back into the Army if we tell them we want that we were a ceremonial unit."

"Good," Harry nodded. "I was also thinking that if we were to get some nice uniforms, we might be able to put men around some of the places that have a high risk of attack. With nice uniforms they'd just be decorations, no one would notice them right?"

"Oh they'd notice them," Smythe nodded. "They don't become invisible for quite a while, but I think the idea has merit. Any other ideas."

"Your book mentioned that a well trained rifleman could hit a target at eight hundred yards?" Harry licked his lips, "could we . . . could we put men on the rooftops? That way if there's an attack they'd be out of sight and could shoot down at the death eaters."

"So you want us to fight a defensive war then?" Smythe nodded.

"At first," Harry admitted. "I think it might be a while before we start fighting back."

"I agree," Smythe nodded. "I think . . ."

A regal looking owl interrupted the man by landing on the table.

". . . that you have a message," Smythe finished with a smile.

"Hmmm," Harry read the message. "Minister Fudge wants to speak with me, he wants to know what he can do to get me to return to the wizarding world."

"When does he want to meet?" Smythe grinned, he was going to enjoy working with this boy.

"Right away," Harry read the last lines of the letter. "He wants to hold a public meeting at the Leaky Cauldron."

"Tell him that you'll be there in fifteen minutes," Smythe advised. "With your permission I'd like to come with you, might be a good idea to have one of the lads come too."

"Do it," Harry nodded. "Any idea how I should handle this?"

"With your permission sir," Smythe smiled. "We'll give them a show, you walk in and me and . . . say McLain will trail behind you. You sit through the meeting and look annoyed and we'll make any suggestions that need to be made."

"That sounds fine," Harry nodded. "Thank you."

"Yes sir," Smythe stood up. "McLain, get over here."

"You called?"

"We're going to go to a meeting with Mr. Potter," Smythe smiled. "Shouldn't be too difficult, Mr. Potter has these bums over a barrel and with luck they won't be too difficult."

"So why are we coming?"

"I've found that its much easier to negotiate with too evil looking thugs standing behind me . . . well, provided they're my thugs of course."

Smythe grinned, "Mr. Potter tells me that the current Minister is a worm."

"Spineless," McLain nodded. "I'm in, sounds like fun."

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AN: Now you know why it has that title.

## Arrangements 02

James 'Genma' Potter

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"Ok," Harry managed to calm a bit. "So I'm engaged to marry forty five girls, it's not so bad. There must be some way I can get out of this."

"Not counting the Harpies, and a few similar groups." Remus supplied helpfully.

"RIGHT," Harry ground his teeth and turned to the Goblin. "WELL?"

"Of course there is sir," the Goblin chuckled. "You don't think that these things are irreversible do you?"

"What do I have to do?" Harry shot out of his seat. "Do I have to kill the dark lord? Say the word and you'll need a mop to clean him up."

Far away, Tom Riddle shivered in fear.

"Nothing so dramatic sir," the Goblin shrugged. "All you have to do is declare that you no longer wish to carry out the wedding before the point of no return deadline."

"Great," Harry allowed himself to relax. "When is the deadline?"

"It was when you said the word great sir," the goblin shrugged. "I'm afraid that now you'll have to submit a large amount of paperwork to the ministry before the passing of the next deadline."

"And with my luck, that will have been when I said the word 'and' or something." Harry joked.

"Catching on quick aren't you sir," the Goblin nodded. "For your information, the deadline passed when you said the word something. Pity you didn't ask for an extension, ah well. I hope you enjoy your marriage Mr. Potter."



"Is it too late to take the other option?" Harry asked with a hopeful look on his face, "I hear that Bangkok is nice this time of year."

"I'm afraid that option disappeared after you said the word 'too,'" the Goblin shrugged. "It's a shame that you didn't ask sooner."

"Yes," a vein on Harry's forehead started to pulsate. "Shame."

"Do you want me to notify the girls of their impending marriage sir?" The Goblin was enjoying this far more than he should.

"No," Harry shook his head. "I'd rather not inform them of anything, after all what they don't know can't hurt me."

"Then I apologize sir," the Goblin frowned. "Most of the girls have already been notified of their engagement to you."

"Then why did you ask me if I wanted you to notify the girls?" Harry's facial twitch was getting worse.

"Idle curiosity on my part," the goblin smiled. "Now if you'll excuse me, I really must be going."

"And I have things to do for the Order," Remus stood. "Have a good . . ."

"Sit down Remus," Harry gave a rather frightening smile. "And tell me if there are any more surprises that I should know about."

"The whole arranged marriage thing is the only one I can think of at the moment," Remus tapped his foot. "And the fact that you have to." The werewolf began coughing, "other than that I can't think of anything."

"What was that?"

"What was what?" Remus gave a nervous smile.

"You coughed," Harry's eyes narrowed. "You were about to reveal some other terrible thing about my life and you started coughing."

"Really?" Remus smiled, "I'm sure that I'd remember doing something like that."

"Yes really," Harry clinched his teeth.

"Well . . ."

"Wotcher Harry," Tonks walked into the room.

"I think I'd better leave you alone with your new betrothed." Remus leapt to his feet and sprinted out of the room.

"What do you want Tonks," Harry asked as he added Remus's name to the revenge list.

"Well," Tonks smiled nervously. "We're supposed to get married and I thought I should talk to you about that."

"I'm supposed to marry you and about a hundred other girls," Harry handed over the list. "Take a look."

"Wow," Tonks shook her head. "Did Remus tell you about the family curse?"

"Family curse?" Harry braced himself for the worst. "What family curse."

"You'll turn into a girl on your seventeenth birthday," Tonks replied. "It's a hereditary thing."

"I see," Harry nodded his head. "Is there anything else I should know?"

"One thing Mr. Potter," the Goblin spoke out as he reentered the room. "We've been searching through our records and we've discovered that your mother engaged you to several men, don't worry it's only twenty four. Apparently there weren't that many wizards that were good enough to be her daughter's husbands."

"I . . . see," Harry's eyes rolled up into his head and he passed out.

"Thanks," Tonks grinned. "I really appreciate the way you helped me get him back like this."

"No problem," the Goblin smiled. "It's all part of the service for our wealthy customers."

"I won't forget it," Tonks smiled. "If I have to be in a group marriage, I want to have as much fun with the concept as possible."

"Can I be the one to tell him that it's all a joke?" The Goblin looked down at the . . . resting Potter with a hopeful grin.

"No," Tonks shook her head.

"Then can I tell him that he has to marry several more women if he wants to escape having to marry all those men?" The Goblin tried to do the puppy eyes.

"Well . . . ok," Tonks nodded. "But you had better give me copies of the pictures of his expression when you do."

"Can I actually engage him to several more women and tell him that it's all a joke just after it's too late to do anything about it?" The Goblin looked like he was about to get on his knees and beg.

"Sure," Tonks nodded she never knew that goblins could be so sadistic. "The more the merrier."

"Thank you," the Goblin cackled. "I'll just go select some new brides for Mr. Potter her."

"Have fun," Tonks cradled her future husband's head in her lap. "Before I forget, what's your name anyway?"

"Rorch," the Goblin grinned sadistically. "They don't normally let me out since the . . . incident, but we were short handed today."

"Ok," Tonks shrugged. "Have fun betrothing my betrothed."

"I will," Rorch assured her then he walked out the door mumbling to himself. "HMMMM, who should I engage him to . . . maybe a pack of Veela, or a bunch of vampires, or . . . maybe . . ."

IIIIIIIIII

"WORMTAIL," Voldemort bellowed.

"You called my Lord?"

"I've just learned that Potter is engaged to several women," the Dark Lord pouted. "And all I have is Bella."

"Yes my Lord," Wormtail nodded.

"So Ah's wants you to get me some hot chicks yo," Voldemort replied.

"Um . . . what?"

"Isn't that the way kids talk these days?" Voldemort asked, "I need to be cool if I'm going to get a few good looking dark consorts."

"I suppose so my Lord," Wormtail shrugged.

"I'm thinking of changing my name to Funk Master V to keep with the times," Voldemort added.

"Um . . . right," Wormtail knew he should have kept living as a rat somewhere.

"Do you think a personal add would help?" Voldemort asked hopefully.

"A . . . personal add master?"

"I was thinking of something along the lines of," Voldemort cleared his throat. "Dark Lord looking for love, turn on's include casting crucio and long walks on the beach. Turn off's are plucky young heroes that always seem to win in the end."

"That sounds . . . great master," it was going to be one of those days.

"Now about those hot dark consorts?"

"I'll get right on it." Wormtail seized his chance to leave.

"Wormtail wait," the Dark Lord called out. "I almost forgot . . . CRUCIO."

Peter screamed in agony as the curse caused him unimaginable pain . . . it was starting to look like it was time to update his resume to send out to prospective employers.

|||||||

Harry was nervous, he was about to meet Hermione and Luna for the first time since learning about his mass engagements and he didn't know how he was going to react to them. His nervousness soon turned to shock as he caught an eyeful of what was happening.

"Listen here," Hermione glanced at her book. "Bitch, I'm the top girl here understand?"

"I think it'd be better if you twisted my robes more and pushed me down," Luna smiled. "That why I'd be forced to look up at you."

"You're supposed to be intimidated," Hermione frowned. "Not giving me pointers on how to do this."

"Oh," Luna blinked sorry. "Could I borrow your book, I've forgotten my line."

"You don't have a line," Hermione glanced back at her book. "It says here that you'll nod fearfully after I menace you enough."

"Are you sure I don't get a line?" Luna frowned. "It doesn't seem fair that you get all the lines and I don't, how do you expect me to get any camera time if I don't get any good lines?"

"I give up," Hermione let the younger girl go. "Maybe I'm not cut out to be the ruthless enforcer type, maybe I can be the slutty massage girl."

"Damn," Luna frowned. "I wanted to be the slutty massage girl."

"Ok, you can be the slutty massage girl." Hermione nodded, "I'll be the . . ."

Harry tip toed out of the room at that point, he wanted to get out of there before either of the girls noticed him.

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AN: So I wrote myself into the fic, Clive Cussler does it all the time.

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OMAKE 01: Why did I write myself into this fic . . . the answer may surprise you.

Rorschach's Blot, international man of mystery and jet setting millionaire playboy had just jumped out of a burning airplane without a parachute after saving the world from the evil mole people for the fifth time when he was suddenly struck by a barrage of lightning.

"Damn," Rorschach muttered as things went dark. "Looks like I finally decided to write one of those terrible Self Insertion fics."

A traditional SI fic as a Sadistically Insane goblin

"Damn," Rorschach looked down at himself. "This was definitely going to cramp my social life." Mentally crossing sleep with everything female off his list of normal Self Insertion character activities, Rorschach began to make his plans.

The first thing he did was go down the list of things needed to write a Self Insertion: Referring to self in the third person , check. Massive Ego, check . . . make that double check.

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OMAKE 02 - What if Harry really was an incurably criminal boy?

"Fire," Harry screamed in joy as he watched the Dursley house burn. "Ahahahahahahaha."

Harry's Hogwarts letter came as it did in the past time line . . . sort of. This one was addressed, room 3c secure ward, St. Bad Brain's Hospital for the Dangerously Criminally Insane: Abandon all hope ye who enter here.

At the Sorting . . .

"GET ME OFF HIM," the Hat screamed in fear. "Oh god why would you allow something like him to exist?"

"I heard the Hat say Gryffindor," Dumbledore looked around. "Did anybody else hear the hat say Gryffindor."

And the first day of charms class . . .

"There are charms that make fire?" Harry ran to the front of the class and clapped like a child . . . a criminally insane child. "Teach me, teach me, teach me."

Getting the Philosopher's stone . . .

"BURN PLANT BURN," Harry cried out joyfully as he tested out his new spells. "Bwahahaha."

The first confrontation with Voldemort . . .

"I can burn people to death with my hands?" Harry's face lit up with joy, "dreams do come true."

And the meeting with Dumbledore . . . .

"What are you doing Harry?" The Headmaster looked at the boy that kept slapping his arm.

"Why did I have to get something I always wanted and then have it ripped away?" Harry looked at his hand in profound disappointment and then picked up his wand. "Ah well, burn you old man burn."

The End . . .

## Luna's Hubby

---

Don't know if I'll do anything with this . . . background is that this is a few years before Hogwarts.

"Tell me about Harry Potter," Luna demanded.

"He's a very brave and intelligent young boy," Luna's mother replied. "And he's the one that saved us all from the dark lord."

"Do you think he'd make a good husband mummy?" Luna asked innocently. In the short time that she had been alive, Luna had focused on her parent's relationship and had come to the conclusion that she wanted one of her own.

"Of course he would dear," Luna's mother assured her daughter. "And maybe he'll become your husband when you get older. I have to go to work now, bye hun."

"Bye mummy," Luna replied automatically. The young girl watched her mother leave and contemplated the words that she'd just been told. "When I'm older? Bugger that, I'm going to go get Harry right now so we can live happily ever after."

Her course set, Luna immediately set to work in accomplishing her goals. A quick visit to her parent's room located a broom and an old invisibility cloak (Her father said it was needed to hunt Mimbari) and she was almost ready to go get her soon to be husband. There was only one problem, she didn't know where Harry Potter was.

"Bugger," Luna cursed. It annoyed her mother and would get her father into trouble so she did it every chance she got. A few more minutes of thought gave her the solution for her dilemma and Luna went off in search of her father.

"Hello rutabaga," Luna's called her his pet name for . . . her. "What can I do for you?"

"I need to find something father," Luna replied quietly. "Can I borrow your multi purpose detector?"



"Ok carrot." The man shrugged, it wasn't like she could get into any trouble with it.

"Thank you father," Luna said quietly. Inside she was jumping for joy, she'd soon have her husband.

Luna went back to her room and donned the invisibility cloak and mounted her broom . . .and nothing happened. Growling in exasperation, the little girl went off in search of her father again.

"Hello again cabbage," Luna's father said when he noticed his daughter. "Do you want me to make you some lunch?"

"No father." Luna shook her head, how was she going to do this without him being suspicious? "I just wanted to know how a broom worked."

"Why?"

"It's not so that I can use it to fly out to find Harry Potter," Luna replied immediately.

"Well . . . as long as you're not going to go out and find Harry Potter," Luna's father agreed. "Hold your hand above it and say 'up' in a firm voice."

"Thank you father." Luna gave the man a peck on the cheek and returned to her room.

Luna was ecstatic, the broom worked and she was on her way to formalize her marriage. It took nearly two hours of flying before Luna managed to find Harry Potter and when she did, she was shocked at his condition.

"Hello," Luna greeted the young boy. "Is your name Harry Potter?"

"Yes," the boy replied nervously.

"Do you want to go home with me and be my husband?"

"Away from here?" Harry perked up.

"Yup," Luna agreed.

|||||

"Luna," her father looked down at the two children. "Who's this boy."

"He's my new husband daddy," Luna smiled up at her father.

"Does your mother know about this?" Luna's father scratched his chin, he was sure that his daughter's marriage was something he'd remember . . . on the other hand, he had probably been drinking to celebrate so . . .

"No daddy," Luna shook her head. "She hasn't gotten home yet."

"I'll tell her then," Luna's father offered. It was the responsible thing to do after all.

"Ok," Luna gave another cute smile and then went back to playing with her new friend.

"Wait a minute." Luna's father froze in his tracks, "what are you trying to pull here Luna?"

"Um . . ."

"You haven't eaten lunch," Luna's father finished. "If you think that I'm going to allow you to skip meals then you have another thing coming."

"Ok father," Luna agreed. "Can you make my husband some food too?"

"Of course my little crabapple."

|||||

"Dear?" Luna's mother had returned home to find her daughter playing with a strange boy and had approached her husband to get an explanation. "Who is that strange boy playing with our daughter?"

"Hmmm?" Luna's father blinked, "oh that's her new husband. I think I drank too much at the wedding and forgot the wedding, I promised Luna that I'd tell you about it."

"I see." It was times like this that she wondered why she married him. "When are his parents coming over to get him?"

"Parents?" Luna's father scratched his chin, "I think Luna said that he was going to live with us. I don't recall anything about any parents."

"Ok." Luna's mother ground her teeth, "who dropped him off?"

"Dropped him off?" Luna's father thought hard for a minute, "no one. He just appeared."

"So what you're telling me is that some strange boy wandered into the house?"

"I'm not saying that at all," Luna's father disagreed. "Luna brought him."

"Luna . . . Honey, could you come in here for a minute." Luna's mother called out, she was going to get to the bottom of things. Luckily her daughter had inherited some common sense . . . from her side of the family.

"What is it mummy?" Luna asked innocently.

"Where did that boy come from?"

"I brought him here mummy," Luna replied quickly.

Now we were getting somewhere, "where did you find him?"

"In a garden doing yard work," Luna said.

"What's his name?" Luna's mother grinned.

"We haven't decided yet mummy," Luna said to her mother's displeasure.

"What do you mean honey?" But the woman wasn't going to let it show.

"You said that after you get married then you have to decide what last name to keep, remember mummy." Luna reminded her mother. "He's my husband now mummy so we have to decide our new name."

"Ok . . . ok . . . what was his old name darling?"

"Harry Potter mummy," Luna answered. "You said that he'd make a good husband."

"Why don't you step out of the room while have a talk with your father about how you were able to go out and track down Harry Potter and then bring him back here when your father was supposed to be watching you . . . ok hun?"

"Ok mummy," Luna agreed.

---

AN: There are a lot of fics where Harry meets with one of the other characters before the books start. In some of them he learns about magic and in others he makes friends that he meets again at school. The scene where Luna's father finds out about her daughter's new husband popped into my head and I wrote this around it. What happens next could be one of two things. One, the two children use accidental magic to magically marry each other and stubbornly refuse to cooperate in any of the attempts to end the marriage. Harry because he's getting food and affection, and Luna because mummy told her that good men are hard to find and if you get one you should keep him forever. Two, Dumbledore finds Harry and puts him back with the Dursleys . . . Harry escapes and returns to the Lovegood house, rinse and repeat.

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### Omake Magic Animagus

"Just focus on your inner animal," McGonagall advised. Harry was taking a super duper advanced Animagus elective and he wanted to get things right the first time.

"Alright Professor," Harry agreed.

The students watched in shock as Harry began to transform. His arms and legs became more muscle and his clothing tore off, unable to handle the strain. Long tentacles grew out of his back and chest . . . you guessed it, Harry was the first tentacle demon Animagus in history.

"I suggest running away," McGonagall screamed on her way to the door. "Mr. Potter may not be able to control his new instincts for a few minutes."

All of the girls screamed and rushed out of the classroom . . . that is to say, all of them except for one.

"You guys go ahead," she called out to her retreating classmates. "I want to try something."

Who is the girl, well . . . it could be some pervy puff. No one suspects the puffs. It could be a girl that loves Harry. Hermione might think she knows a charm that will control a tentacle demon, or she might just be kinky. It's all up to you.

AN: We've all seen fics where Harry turns into some great magical creature when he becomes an Animagus.

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### Omake: Time Travel

A harry from a terrible future goes back in time to fix things . . . or something.

It was the beginning of . . . let's say fourth year, and the students had just completed their sorting.

"It worked," Harry suddenly stood up and began to shout. "I'm back baby."

"Is there some reason that you saw fit to disturb us Mr. Potter?" Snape growled, being the only teacher that wasn't frozen in shock.

"Yeah," Harry replied with a grin. "I come from a horrendous future where everything is evil and most everyone is dead . . . except for that first year over there, he's in a coma."

The indicated first year shrunk away from the curious stares, "coma?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "Coma."

"What happened?" Another student asked.

"He got drunk and ate a toad, then he jumped off a building." Harry said quietly, "it was the celebration of the second downfall of Voldemort and well . . . let's just say things got a little nuts."

"For what purpose have you come back to this time?" Dumbledore asked, "was it to stop the war?"

"I guess you could say that," Harry agreed. "Mostly I came back so I could kill all those damn death eaters again . . . reducto." Harry shot a curse at the surprised potions master.

"What are you doing Potter?" Snape screamed as he dodged out of the way.

"You killed Dumbles in my fifth year," Harry explained as he shot a few more curses at the greasy man. "Killing you the first time was so fun that I just had to do it again . . . anyone wanna know how I did it last time?"

"I do," Ron shouted. "Was it slow?"

"Very," Harry agreed.

"What did you do?" Ron was bouncing in his chair, "come on mate . . . tell me."

"I used a whither charm on him," one of Harry's hexes finally connected with the greasy man and Snape fell to the ground screaming. "This time I turned his blood to acid . . . always liked that hex."

"Harry, I demand that you stop with this foolishness right now." Dumbledore commanded, "you can not do this."

"Yeah," Hermione agreed. "You can't just go around killing people because of what they might do."

"I agree Hermione," Harry agreed. "I killed Snape because he's a bastard that killed innocent people in the past and because he was always being a jerk to me and my friends."

"Damn it Harry," Hermione screamed. "That was my only argument . . . I don't suppose you'd be willing to stop killing people until I can think of another argument?"

"Reducto." Harry blasted Draco's face through the back of his head. "Nope."

"Damn it Harry." Hermione screamed, "you can't just go around killing everyone."

"He was a death eater," Harry said simply. "Reducto."

"And I suppose that you're going to tell me that trelany is a death eater too?" Hermione scowled.

"Um . . . yes?" Harry blinked, "of course . . . a death eater . . . I'd never just kill someone because they annoyed me."

"I'm gonna let that one go," Hermione said after a moment of thought.

Three days later . . .

"Hey Hermione?" Ron called out, "what's the weather look like outside."

"Let me check the window," Hermione put down her book and glanced out. "Damn it Harry."

"What is it?" One of the students called out.

"It's raining bodies out there." Hermione noticed the incredulous looks, "really . . . Harry cast some sort of blasting charm on a group of death eaters."

---

### Omake: The Real Harry Potter

"You sent for me Professor?" Draco tried to show at least a little respect for the school's Headmaster, his father would skin him alive if he called too much attention to the family at this stage.

"Yes, have a seat Mr. Malfoy." Dumbledore gestured towards a chair, "I have some rather shocking news for you."

"Is my mother ok?" Draco asked nervously.

"To the best of my knowledge yes." Dumbledore's eyes twinkled, "I called you up here not to talk about your parents but to tell you something about yourself."

"What is it?" Draco asked in confusion. Was the old man going to go on some spiel about how he couldn't become a death eater.

"After the attack on the Potter house, I decided to do everything within my power to protect the last of the Potters." Dumbledore gave a sad sigh, "the world thinks I placed Harry in the care of his Aunt . . . that is not the truth."

"Why are you telling me this?" Draco demanded.

"Because I think it's time for the truth to come out," Dumbledore replied. "I placed Harry with a dark family, a family of death eaters and I placed their son with Harry's aunt. I then used a powerful and ancient spell to conceal their identities, neither would know about their true self . . . until now."

"What?" Draco's pupils shrunk.

"I'm sorry Harry, forgive an old man for what he's done to you." Dumbledore said sadly, "I would have let things stay as they were if it were not for the return of Voldemort."



"You don't want me to join him?" Draco gave an inward smirk, maybe he could use this to his advantage.

"I feared that Voldemort would realise your true identity if you took the dark mark," Dumbledore explained. "If that happened then you would be killed."

"Why would he kill me if I were one of his followers?" Draco sneered, yes this could be very useful.

"There is a prophecy that was given before you were born," Dumbledore said. "Roughly, it states that if you die in horrendous agony then the dark lord will gain power. He plans to sacrifice you to gain an upper hand over the wizarding world, I couldn't allow that to happen to you. I'm sorry Harry, my attempt to keep you safe has only put you in greater danger."

"Stop calling me Harry," Draco screamed.

"Perhaps you should have some time to yourself to think about this," Dumbledore mused. "I shall not mention this again, goodbye Harry."

Dumbledore watched as Draco stormed out of his office and sighed to himself. A few minutes later, he arose from his desk and made his way to the room of requirements.

"Well?" Ron demanded, "what happened?"

"Just a moment," Dumbledore said serenely. "I believe that the Polyjuice is about to wear off."

"Damn it Harry," Ron screamed. "I don't want to wait that long, did he fall for it or not?"

---

Omake: Fun with Polyjuice

"I'm gonna have fun teaching you your place mudblood," Draco sneered at Hermione. "You're going to be a broken slave slut when I'm done with you."

"Why you," Ron screamed.

"Harry grab him before he gets into trouble," Hermione commanded.

"See you around scar head," Draco snickered.

The trio watched disgust as the arrogant boy walked off.

"I'm gonna kill him," Ron snarled.

"I'll help you," Harry offered.

"No," Hermione said simply. "You two in Azkaban is much worse then his insults."

"We can't just let him get away with this," Harry protested.

"We won't," Hermione said with an evil grin. "Did you know that I still have some Polyjuice left over?"

The two boys began to snicker as Hermione outlined her plan, those snickers turned into full blown laughter, and the laughter into dry heaves . . . it was an icky plan.

IIIIIIIIII

*Draco,*

*There will be a gift waiting for you in the abandoned classroom by the one eyed witch after your last class today.*

*Your Father*

*Lucius*

Draco grinned as he reread his letter, what did daddy get him. His grin widened when he walked into the classroom and saw a whimpering girl tied up on one of the desks.

"You and I are going to have a lot of fun," Draco said evilly.

Draco disrobed and got down to business . . . as I'm sure you've guessed, the polyjuice wore off after the first few seconds . . . great timing huh?"

The next day, the front page of the Quibbler was covered with a moving color picture of the heir to the Malfoy fortune engaging in . . . relations with a duck. This was accompanied by a large article speculating on the the purity of the Malfoy bloodline. The boy's protests that his father had set everything up did not help his case as much as he thought it would.

Harry Moody III

---

"Ms. Granger," Minerva yelled in an attempt to get her student's attention. "I would like to know why you weren't in your dormitory last night."

"Hmmm?" Hermione looked up with a dazed expression, "do you think he really meant it when he said that my eyes sparkled like the stars and my beauty was such that even a memory would keep him warm in the coldest of storms? I'm not sure if he was serious about my lips tasting of liquid chocolate that inflames his soul with desire, it's a nice thought though."

"I take it you have a boyfriend then." The head of house asked with a frown, "starting younger and younger . . . on the other hand, this would explain what happened to Mr. Weasley. What's his name?"

"He calls me his goddess of wisdom and I call him Constant," Hermione grinned. "Isn't that grand? Oh, it's just like I'm a princess in one of those fairy tales that I pretend not to be interested in."

"Twenty points if you can tell me the first rule of transfiguration." Minerva smirked, if this didn't snap the girl out of her delirium then she'd be forced to use her flying monkeys . . . that is to say, that she'd be all out of options.

"Ohhh, he's so handsome and strong." Hermione giggled again, "and the way he refuses to turn his back to me is sooo romantic."

"You win this round Ms. Granger," Minerva gave a horrifying grin. "But next time you won't be so lucky, ehehehehehehe . . . " she stopped in mid laugh, maybe it was time for a vacation.

As the professor stalked off to rest, or use her transfiguration skills to create horrifying crosses between monkeys and birds. Hermione found herself surrounded by gossip starved girls, all wanting to know every single detail of the time she had spent with her new boyfriend.

IIIIIIII

"My chamber," Evil Possessed Ginny smiled. "How I've missed you." The girl possessed by the dark lord walked into the chamber, "come out and cleanse the world of Mud bloods . . . I said come out and cleanse the world. Wake up you stupid snake."

"I don't appreciate you calling me a stupid snake," a cold gravely voice replied from behind the dark girl.

"What?" Evil Ginny spun around.

"I said that I don't appreciate you calling me a stupid snake," Harry's eye whirled.

"Who are you?" Evil Ginny's eyes widened, "how did you find this place?"

"Those are my questions," Harry gave an evil leer. "Time to die."

"Wait!" Tom did not like the calm way the strange boy had spoken. "I'm a spirit in possession of this body, if you kill me then you'll be killing an innocent too."

"That complicates things," Harry frowned. "On the other hand I've already seduced one girl into silence and Pop says that they don't like it when you do more then one at a time for some reason . . . goodbye."

"Wait again," Ginny screamed. "He's in my diary, destroy the diary and you'll destroy him."

"Fine," Harry sighed as he took the evil book. "Don't move from that spot."

Harry took care of the book with a few well placed spells and went off in search for the witness he'd had to seduce.

IIIIIIIIII

"And that's why . . . can I help you with something?" Snape glared at the interruption.

"No," Harry shook his head. "I'm just here change your memories and take her away."

"Ok," Hermione stood. "Let's go."

"Sit down or I'll take a thousand points from your pathetic house," Snape screamed. "What makes you think that you can just come in hear and defeat us all?"

"Because I already did," Harry yawned. "You'd think a Potions Master would have noticed the additive I put in his food . . . but I guess that you're better at baiting then potions."

"What?" Snape and most of the students slumped to the ground.

"Ready to go Hermione?" Harry yawned.

"Aren't you going to mess with their memories?" Hermione looked around the room.

"No need," Harry smirked. "I've been experimenting with a new potion that will wipe the last fifteen minutes of memories."

"Oh," Hermione nodded. "Any side effects?"

"Explosive bowel disruption and violent nightmares," Harry nodded. "But only when mixed with certain hair products."

"Ok," Hermione shouldered her bag. "What did you want to talk with me about?"

"Found another girl that I can't Obliviate," Harry frowned. "So I was going to ask you if you had any idea what I should do . . . dad said that girls didn't like it when you seduced more then one at a time."

"Why don't you take me to go see her and we can decide what to do then," Hermione suggested as the two of them walked out of the room. "So . . . exactly how did this all happen?"

"Well . . ."

In the class room behind them, Draco and Snape soiled themselves . . . then began to scream. They were discovered half an hour later when the next class showed up . . . the students looked at each other and as one decided to pick up their sleeping class mates and to leave Draco and Snape to their fates.

|||||||

"So that's how it all happened," Harry put a large plate in front of both girls and another in front of himself.

"This is good," Ginny smiled. "What is it?"

"Yeah," Hermione agreed. "I didn't know you could cook?"

"Family tradition," Harry gave a suspicious glance at the two girls.

"So what is it?" Ginny prompted.

"Tandoori Basilisk," Harry grunted.

"Oh," the girls froze. "Where did you get the Basilisk?"

"Found it in here last year," Harry took another bite. "Enough meat to keep me fed for the next few years . . . it was a big one."

"Oh," Hermione poked her meal with her fork.

"Yeah," Ginny agreed.

"I don't think it will be necessary to seduce her to keep Ginny from talking," Hermione smiled at the other girl. "I'm sure she'll keep quiet."

"I disagree," Ginny shook her head. "The only way you can trust me is if you seduce me . . . who knows what I'll do if you leave things to chance."

"Don't listen to her," Hermione's smile widened. "She's the sort of person you can trust to keep quiet . . . right?"

"No," Ginny shook her head. "I'm a blabber mouth, the only way to be sure is if you seduce me . . . you do want to be sure don't you?"

"I don't think pop ever told me what to do in this situation," Harry said with a rather frightening frown. "I'm going to have to write to him."

"I'm sure he'll say that she can be trusted to keep her mouth shut," Hermione said. "RIGHT GINNY?"

"No," Ginny disagreed. "Seduction is the only way to be sure."

---

AN: I know it's short but it's also an odd idea so that's ok, I've got Luna on the brain and I don't want to add her to this. Omake is below. I've got another odd idea about how Dobby goes back in time to save Harry Potter sir when he is a young Harry Potter sir, who knows if that will get written and who knows why I told you all about it.

---

Omake: What can I say, I've got Luna on the brain.

"I'm sure he'll say that she can be trusted to keep her mouth shut," Hermione said. "RIGHT GINNY?"

"No," Ginny disagreed. "Seduction is the only way to be sure."

"I agree," Luna entered the conversation. "Harry has to seduce all of us."

"Where'd you come from?" Everyone looked at the odd girl.

"That door over there," Luna replied. "there's a secret passage from the girl's showers to this room filled with all sorts of dirty pictures and from the room to here."



Play it Again Sam

It had been one week since he had killed Voldemort and every death eater and Harry Potter didn't know what to do next. His friends were dead, his family was dead, his enemies were dead, most of his acquaintances were dead and . . . well, you get the idea.

Harry looked around, it looked like he was sitting in St. Mungos getting treated for alcohol poisoning, the victory party was a killer.

"Um . . . Mr. Potter," the nervous healer said, well . . . nervously.

"Yeah?" Harry giggled.

"It is my sad duty to tell you that the person you brought in with you has fallen into a coma."

"Coma?" Harry asked with a crazed grin.

"Yes coma," the healer confirmed. "And, well I hate to tell you this but your wife is dead."

"Wife?" Harry asked in confusion. "I don't have a wife . . . do I?"

"You got married during the victory celebrations," the Healer replied. "A rat turned into a man and killed her three seconds after you said your vows."

"Hmmm," Harry hummed. "Short fat guy? I carved out his spleen and forced him to eat it?"

"Yes sir," the healer said quickly. "Then you spent the next two hours torturing him to death."

"I might recall something like that," Harry said with another giggle.

"Yes . . . well." The healer wiped the sweat off his forehead. "Why don't I just step outside the room then?"

"Ok," Harry agreed with another insane giggle.

The healer left the room and hurried down the hall to a group of waiting men.

"Well?" One of the men asked impatiently.

"I'm sorry Minister," the healer began. "But Harry Potter is insane."

"We expected that," one of the other men spoke up. "I wouldn't expect anyone to be whole after the deaths of everyone they cared about and more exposure crucios than anyone has ever suffered without becoming a drooling idiot."

"What can we do with him?" The Minister turned to his flunkies, "he's too dangerous to keep around and too dangerous to send assassins after."

"I'll go talk to him," one of the younger men said suddenly. "With any luck I can persuade him to leave the wizarding world."

"Suggest that he go to Siberia," the Minister commanded. "Nothing there that we care about."

"I will sir," the flunky agreed with a sigh. The flunky took one deep breath to steady his nerves and walked up the hall to the crazed hero's room.

"Mr. Potter?" The flunky called out as he entered the room.

"Got someone for me to kill?" Harry asked eagerly, "it's been almost two days since I killed someone and I'm getting a bit antsy."

"No sir," the flunky replied.

"No enemies of the wizarding world?" Harry begged, "dark lords? Dark creatures? Tax men? There's got to be someone."

"No sir," the flunky said. "I'm afraid that you killed them all and I dare say that with you around there won't be any new ones."

"I killed them all? No new ones," Harry whined. "What am I going to do now?"

"I hear Siberia is a good place to retire," the flunky suggested nervously.

"You don't know what you've got till it's gone," Harry lamented.

"What's that sir?" The flunky asked.

"I'll just have to go back," Harry said to himself. "Plenty of enemies in the past . . . and if it was fun to kill them the first time then it'll be even better to do it again. I'll even be able to get a few that the others got."

"Um . . . sir?" The flunky was trying to decide if wetting himself might be the best course of action.

"Yeah, that's the ticket." Harry agreed to himself, "I'll go back in time."

"I really don't think . . ."

"Thanks buddy," Harry said to the flunky. "That was a great idea you gave me."

"Um . . ."

And with that, Harry cast some sort of strange spell to cast his soul back into his younger body or something. Don't ask me what he did, I'm not an expert on this sort of thing I just record what happened . . . hey, you try balancing time to work, write, live, eat, etc. I don't have the time to learn magic and complex temporal theory, I've got bills to pay and there are only so many hours in the day. I'm not going to talk about this anymore, let's just get back to the story.

It was the first day of Harry's fourth year of school and the great hall waited in silence to hear the Headmaster's announcement.

"I did it," Harry screamed out in joy. "Yes."

"Is there something you'd like to share with us Harry?" The Headmaster asked kindly.

"I'm back baby," Harry replied loudly. "And the streets will run red with the blood of my enemies."

"Sit down Potter," Snape hissed.

"Piss off," Harry replied with a grin.

"Um . . . why did you see fit to interrupt me Harry?" Dumbledore tried again.

"Hmmm?" Harry's eyes turned to regard the Headmaster, "what was your name again? Dumdum right, well here's what happened Dumdum . . ."

"It's Dumbledore," the Headmaster interrupted.

"Whatever," Harry said dismissively. "I was just happy that my spell worked."

"What spell was that?" Dumbledore asked with a grin.

"My spell to send myself back in time," Harry replied. "I come from a horrendous future where everything is evil and most everyone is dead . . . except for that first year over there, he's in a coma."

The indicated first year shrunk away from the curious stares, "coma?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "Coma."

What happened?" Another student asked.

"He got drunk and ate a toad, then he jumped off a building." Harry said quietly, "it was the celebration of the second downfall of Voldemort and well . . . let's just say things got a little nuts."

"For what purpose have you come back to this time?" Dumbledore asked, "was it to stop the war?"

"I guess you could say that," Harry agreed. "Mostly I came back so I could kill all those damn death eaters again . . . reducto." Harry shot a curse at the surprised potions master.

"What are you doing Harry," Dumbledore asked quickly. "Stop this."

"Why?" Harry asked with a frown as he cast a rather painful dark hex at the Potions master.

"What are you doing Potter?" Snape screamed as he dodged out of the way.

"You killed Dumbles in my fifth year," Harry explained as he shot a few more curses at the greasy man. "Killing you the first time was so fun that I just had to do it again . . . anyone wanna know how I did it last time?"

"I do," Ron shouted. "Was it slow?"

"Very," Harry agreed.

"What did you do?" Ron was bouncing in his chair, "come on mate . . . tell me."

"I used a whither charm on him," one of Harry's hexes finally connected with the greasy man and Snape fell to the ground screaming. "This time I turned his blood to acid . . . always liked that hex."

"Harry, I demand that you stop with this foolishness right now." Dumbledore commanded as he cast the counter curse to save Snape's life, "you can not do this."

"Why?" Harry asked with an expression of innocence that no one believed for a second . . . well, no one except for Hagrid.

"Because you can't just go around killing people because of what they might do." Hermione replied with a frown, "he hasn't killed Dumbledore yet."

"So I can't kill him for killing Dumdum?" Harry sagged.

"Yes," Hermione agreed. "It would be wrong to kill him for that."

"Then I'm going to kill him for what he's already done," Harry said enthusiastically. "He's a rat bastard who's done his best to make my life difficult and I'm sure that he's done the same to other people, he's

probably killed a few innocent people in his time as a death eater too."

Everyone turned to hear Hermione's rebuttal causing the girl to redden and sink into her seat.

"That was my only argument," Hermione admitted. "I don't suppose you'd be willing to stop killing people until I can think of another argument?"

"Nope," Harry said cheerfully. "Reducto."

Draco made a sick gurgling sound as his lower jaw shattered, showering his house mates with blood and tooth fragments.

"Damn it Harry," Hermione screamed, "you can't just go around killing everyone."

"Yes I can," Harry disagreed.

"No you can't," Hermione argued. "He hasn't done anything that warrants death."

"He's a death eater," Harry said with a grin. "And it was really fun to kill him the first time, he made a sort of squeaking squeal and it was so funny."

"Tell me about it mate," Ron suggested earning a withering glare from his other friend.

"He didn't last too long," Harry said sadly. "Died after only a few minutes."

"Shut up Ron," Hermione growled. "And stop it Harry."

"Ok," Harry said sadly. "Hey, what's that behind you?"

"Where?" Hermione turned to look.

"Reducto." Harry blasted the Divination Professor's face through the back of her head.

"And I suppose that you're going to say that she was a death eater too?" Hermione asked sarcastically.

"Um . . . yes?" Harry agreed quickly.

"Screw it," Hermione said. The girl threw up her hands and sat down. "Kill whoever you want, I don't care."

"Great," Harry said in a voice filled with joy. "That's what I came back to do and I'm glad I have your support on this."

"Wait," Hermione called out. Harry had disappeared and every face in the great hall was turned toward her. "I was using reverse psychology." Hermione explained lamely.

AN: This is just an expansion of an omake I did, idea popped into my head so I had to write it. The original omake is below.

The Omake that spawned this odd idea.

Time Travel

A harry from a terrible future goes back in time to fix things . . . or something.

It was the beginning of . . . let's say fourth year, and the students had just completed their sorting.

"It worked," Harry suddenly stood up and began to shout. "I'm back baby."

"Is there some reason that you saw fit to disturb us Mr. Potter?" Snape growled, being the only teacher that wasn't frozen in shock.

"Yeah," Harry replied with a grin. "I come from a horrendous future where everything is evil and most everyone is dead . . . except for that first year over there, he's in a coma."

The indicated first year shrunk away from the curious stares, "coma?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "Coma."

"What happened?" Another student asked.

"He got drunk and ate a toad, then he jumped off a building." Harry said quietly, "it was the celebration of the second downfall of Voldemort and well . . . let's just say things got a little nuts."

"For what purpose have you come back to this time?" Dumbledore asked, "was it to stop the war?"

"I guess you could say that," Harry agreed. "Mostly I came back so I could kill all those damn death eaters again . . . reducto." Harry shot a curse at the surprised potions master.

"What are you doing Potter?" Snape screamed as he dodged out of the way.

"You killed Dumbles in my fifth year," Harry explained as he shot a few more curses at the greasy man. "Killing you the first time was so fun that I just had to do it again . . . anyone wanna know how I did it last time?"

"I do," Ron shouted. "Was it slow?"

"Very," Harry agreed.

"What did you do?" Ron was bouncing in his chair, "come on mate . . . tell me."

"I used a whither charm on him," one of Harry's hexes finally connected with the greasy man and Snape fell to the ground screaming. "This time I turned his blood to acid . . . always liked that hex."

"Harry, I demand that you stop with this foolishness right now." Dumbledore commanded, "you can not do this."

"Yeah," Hermione agreed. "You can't just go around killing people because of what they might do."



"I agree Hermione," Harry agreed. "I killed Snape because he's a bastard that killed innocent people in the past and because he was always being a jerk to me and my friends."

"Damn it Harry," Hermione screamed. "That was my only argument . . . I don't suppose you'd be willing to stop killing people until I can think of another argument?"

"Reducto." Harry blasted Draco's face through the back of his head. "Nope."

"Damn it Harry." Hermione screamed, "you can't just go around killing everyone."

"He was a death eater," Harry said simply. "Reducto."

"And I suppose that you're going to tell me that trelany is a death eater too?" Hermione scowled.

"Um . . . yes?" Harry blinked, "of course . . . a death eater . . . I'd never just kill someone because they annoyed me."

"I'm gonna let that one go," Hermione said after a moment of thought.

Three days later . . .

"Hey Hermione?" Ron called out, "what's the weather look like outside."

"Let me check the window," Hermione put down her book and glanced out. "Damn it Harry."

"What is it?" One of the students called out.

"It's raining bodies out there." Hermione noticed the incredulous looks, "really . . . Harry cast some sort of blasting charm on a group of death eaters."

## Just a Spoonful of Sugar

---

Harry Potter was not having a good day. It had all started when his teacher had told everyone to write a letter filled with their fondest desires. Dudley had filled his list with chocolates and motorbikes, Harry had asked for a home where he wouldn't be beaten if he made a mistake when he cooked breakfast and a mother. The other children had laughed and the teacher had sent him home with a note asking for a teacher conference.

Vernon's face purpled when he read the teachers note and the vein on his forehead began to throb when he read Harry's letter. "So you don't like it here do you?" Vernon asked in a low dangerous voice, "think you're too good to live with the rest of us do you?"

"No uncle Vernon," Harry replied fearfully.

"Go to your cupboard," Vernon ordered. "I'll deal with you later."

"Yes uncle Vernon," Harry said meekly.

Vernon watched the little freak walk back to his cupboard and then turned his attention back to the letter in his hands. He couldn't beat the little freak, not when he'd been asked to meet with the bastard's teacher. The beating would have to wait and Vernon promised himself that when the time came he would make the experience something that the freak would never forget. The fat man tore up the letter and cast it into the fireplace.

The fragments of letter got caught in a thermal that carried them up from the flames and through the chimney. At the mouth of the chimney they were taken up by a gust of wind and to a woman reclining on a bank of clouds.

"What do we have here?" The woman asked herself as the fragments reformed themselves into a sheet of paper. The woman's face hardened as she began to read and it was set into a scowl when she finished. "Things can not be left as they are."

IIIIIIII

Hogwart's Headmaster was resting in his office, it had been seven years since he had left young Harry Potter at his relatives house and he was sparing a rare thought about the boy's safety.

"It'll be good for him," Albus mused to himself. "It wouldn't do to have someone so important be the product of an easy childhood. These years of difficulty will prepare him for the difficulties that he'll face in the future."

"Albus." Fig's face was in the fireplace and the old woman was frantic. "It's terrible, the wards have gone down."

"Step back," Dumbledore commanded. "I'm coming through."

Dumbledore was through the fireplace in an instant and he hit Mrs. Figg

sitting room at a dead run.

"What should we do Albus?" The old woman asked quickly.

"I think it would be best if I were to investigate things," Dumbledore suggested. "It could just be that I made an error when I put the wards up that caused them to collapse."

"You don't really believe that do you Albus?" The old woman asked with a sceptical frown.

"No," Albus replied honestly.

"Then be off with you," Arabella said sharply. "Every second could count."

"Right you are," Dumbledore said quickly. The old man hurried to the front door and made his way to the Dursley household. His heart sunk when he saw the shattered front door and he readied this wand to combat any menace that might appear.

"You," Petunia screamed. "This is all your doing."

"My doing?" Dumbledore asked quietly. "Where's Harry?"

"She took him," the angry woman replied. "One of your sort, one would think that a freak would have enough curtsy to keep the other freaks away."

"Who took him? Who is she?" Dumbledore demanded.

"Here," Petunia threw a note at the Headmaster. "She left this for you, she said that you'd be coming."

"What . . ."

"Now get out," Petunia demanded. "Out of my house."

"I . . ."

"Are you too stupid to understand simple English?" Petunia continued to rant, "get out of my house or I'll call the Police."

Reasoning that there was nothing more to be done, Albus left the house and opened the letter. As he read the letter, he felt a strange mix of sorrow and joy. Sorrow at the contents and joy that at least Harry was safe.

*Albus,*

*I am very disappointed with you. You put young Harry with the worst sort of people and to compound that error you never took the time to check on him. He is with me now and he shall not be going back to that place. I know I taught you better than this.*

*-Mary*

---

AN: Well, here's my submission to the new bet, if you don't know what I'm talking about go here [groups dot yahoo dot com backslash group backslash HarryFellDownAWell](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/backslashHarryFellDownAWell) frigging likes to kill addresses so let's see if that'll work. I am going to try to let this idea sit for a little while while I work on everything else but I would not be surprised if it held me hostage and forced me to write more of it to the detriment of

my other fics. Tell me what you think and I hope everyone recognized the cross.

## Makes the Medicine go Down

---

"Having another bet are we?" Everyone turned away from the well to look at the speaker.

"What're you doing here?" One of the gods growled.

"Yeah," another agreed. "How did you escape."

"That's not important." The speaker was an ugly looking goblin with ink stains on his arms, "what is important is that I have come to place a bet."

"Let him throw his stone," the Black cat called out.

"Fine," one of the gods spat. "But on your head be it."

"Not going to be giving up my stones," the Goblin cackled. "I like them where they are."

"Then what are you going to use?" One of the goddess asked.

"This," the Goblin said reaching into his pocket to pull out a a bottle of ink.

"You can't . . ." Bill the god of . . . stuff called out. But it was too late, the gods watched in horror as the goblin pored the ink into the well. "You idiot, it'll take hours to clean that up."

"Just watch," Rorschach the goblin god of embezzlement, criminal insanity, and bad self insertions ordered.

The gods watched in shock as the time line twisted to show a young Harry Potter being raised by the magic world's most infamous nanny and all eyes turned to stare at the odd looking goblin as the scene faded.

"Well?" Tyche demanded.

"Well what?" The Goblin scowled.

"What happens next?" Nemisis growled, "it's not a proper entry unless it shows him going back to Hogwarts. Or at the very least meeting up with the Hogwarts crew."

"Oh," the Goblin nodded. "Look into the well."

Harry and his mum stood on the platform waiting for the train to arrive.

"I still don't understand why I must go to this school," Harry complained. "I'm sure that I'd learn much more if I stayed with you."

"It'll be good for you to spend time with children your own age," Mary replied. "And don't slouch."

"Yes mum," Harry agreed.

"And don't take any guff from that Headmaster," Mary added. "If he gives you any trouble then don't hesitate to remind him who your mum is, he's not too old for me to discipline if it comes down to it."

"I'll remember that mum," Harry said solemnly. "I'll miss you."

"I'll miss you too Harry," Mary said fondly. "But we still have a bit of time before the train gets here, I've brought a bag of crumbs if you'd like to feed the birds with me."

"Ok mum," Harry agreed. Harry and his mother fed the birds until the train arrived and before putting him on the train, Mary gave her son one last inspection.

"Don't forget to clean behind your ears," Mary commanded. "And have fun son." With that, Mary gave her son one last kiss on the forehead before sending him off to school.

IIIIIIII

McGonagall froze when she read the next name on her list, "Harry . . . Poppins?"

"Here ma'am," Harry called out. McGonagall turned to look down at the oddly serious little boy, in his left hand was a carpet bag with an umbrella strapped to the top of it.

"You're sure it's Poppins?" McGonagall was taken by how much the boy looked like James.

"Yes ma'am," Harry agreed. "Should I go up to the hat then?"

"Yes go along then," McGonagall instructed. Harry placed the hat on his head and the hall froze, all waiting to hear the verdict. This was no run of the mill first year, changing his family name to Poppins fooled no one.

"You're her son?" The hat said in shock, "then what are you doing here? Slytherin would make you great, Hufflepuff would give you friends, Ravenclaw would help you learn, and Gryffindor would have reflected your nobility."

"It makes no difference to me . . . sir?" Harry finished uncertainly.

"Polite one aren't you," the hat mused. "Then it had better be . . ."

"So what happens next?" Nemesis demanded. "And why did you stop it?"

"Harry spends most of his time hopping into paintings," the Goblin said. "He learns quite a bit of magic in a relatively short time and every thing is happy."

"What about when Voldemort goes after the stone?" One of the gods asked, "

"Harry calls his mum for help when Voldemort goes after the Philosopher's Stone," the Goblin replied. "Mary shows up and tells the dark lord to stop all that nonsense."

"And?" The angry goddess demanded.

"How should I know," the Goblin shrugged. "What am I a god?"



"Yes you are," the goddess growled.

"Oh yeah," the Goblin nodded. "I forgot . . . hey look, something else is happening in the well."

"Why are we in America?" Dudley whined.

"I told you hon," Petunia replied. "It's to visit your cousin Eric."

"I don't wanna visit my cousin Eric," Dudley screamed. "I wana go home."

"Boy knows what he wants," Vernon said in approval.

"Then why did we have to bring him along?" Dudley pointed an accusing finger at Harry.

"Mrs. Figg is having surgery," Petunia replied. "I'm sorry he had to come and ruin it dear."

The image froze before anything more could happen and several angry gods glared at the goblin.

"What did you just do?" One of the larger gods asked through clenched teeth.

"Why do you ask?" The Goblin replied nervously.

"There is only one fat little bastard in the multi-verse named Eric that is as whiny as Dudley," the God explained. "And if you crossed this with South Park then so help me . . ."

"Why don't we just stop here then," the Goblin suggested. "And forget anything ever happened."

"Fine," the god agreed.

"Why don't you tell us what happened?" Tyche asked.

"Ok," the goblin said quickly. "The Dursleys find a way to leave Harry behind in America, he spends a lot of time with his friends Stan and

Kyle making fun of his fat cousin. Let's just say that it's a very different Harry Potter that arrives at Hogwarts."

The scene shifted to show Harry standing in the great hall glaring up at the head table.

"I'm not going to join some fruity little house in this gay ass school," Harry yelled. "Screw you guys, I'm going home."

"Looks like he picked up a few things from his cousin," Nemisis said with a grin. "I don't think I've ever seen that look on Dumbledore's face."

"So Harry goes home and Voldemort follows," the Goblin said with a grin. "Voldemort is intrigued by Kenny's immortality and uses him in a dark ritual."

"So Voldemort's spirit gets trapped in Kenny's body where he can't trouble anyone else again and they all live happily ever after," Nemisis concluded. "Were you drunk when you came up with this? Be happy I'm still happy about what you have planned for me and my friend lady luck or I'd have your head for this monstrosity."

"Try not to let any of my secrets slip," the Goblin said with a leer. "Would a couple Omakes sweeten your disposition?"

"They might," the goddess allowed.

"Would they now?" the goblin's leer deepened.

"Not that much," the goddess said in disgust. "And get on with it."

"Story of my life," the goblin said sadly. "So without further ado . . ."

Omake: Heir to a not so great wizard

Harry was sitting in his room at Privy Drive being spied on by the Order and angsting over the fact that his Godfather had just been killed. To sum things up he was being a whiny little bitch, possibly because some authors confuse whiny little bitch with dramatic hero . . . I'd rather not speculate further.

As I was saying, Harry was being a whiny little bitch when an owl burst through the window and gave him a letter or something.

*Dear Mr. Potter,*

*Due to the death of your godfather you have been declared fit to handle your own finances. If you do not wish to have this responsibility then you can give it to Dumbledore so that he can have more control over your life. Dumbledore will probably give control over to Snape in an attempt to build greater understanding between the two of you. Snape will not be understanding because he is a rat bastard and will take the opportunity to loot your vaults and make your life hell . . . we wouldn't discount the fact that many people would use this idea for a story line as an excuse to write slash. If you do not want all this to happen, just say NOOOOO in a loud voice and this letter which is also a portkey will transport you to Gringotts.*

*Signed*

*Snapdragon*

"NOOOOOOOOOO," Harry screamed as his eyes drifted over the part where Snape got control over his life. The portkey activated and Harry never did get a chance to finish his letter.

"Welcome to Gringotts," said a random goblin. "Sirius Black gave everything to you and declared you to be his adopted son."

"I'd give it all up to have him back in my arms right now," Harry sighed.

"What kind of relationship did you two have?" The goblin asked with an odd look on his face.

"He was my godfather . . .why?" Harry asked.

"No reason," the goblin said with a nervous laugh. "Why don't you just use this blood quill to do a family tree so that we can see what you stand to inherit."

"Ok," Harry agreed.

"And if you'll take some unsolicited advise . . . stop trying to sound so dramatic, this isn't the time or place to ham it up."

"Fine," Harry said with a shrug. "What's this name?"

"Turns out you're the heir to a not so powerful wizard," the Goblin said. "And you stand to inherit his power."

"What power?" Harry perked up, maybe this could help him defeat Voldemort.

"Let's see . . .you get an affinity with Kneazles, they'll like you more than anything else in the world and do your bidding." The goblin squinted at another portion of the page. "And a blood feud with some little blue communist gnomes that can be turned into gold via an alchemical process."

"Blue communist gnomes?" Harry asked with an odd look on his face.

"Yes, blue communist gnomes." The goblin agreed, "your ancestor was instrumental in fighting them and we at Gringotts think he's a . . . well, I wouldn't say hero . . . um . . . we don't hate him?"

"Cool," Harry said. "What was this guy's name?"

"You Harry." The goblin paused for dramatic effect. "Are the heir to Gargamel, the greatest and only bane to the blue communist gnomes."

Omake: The lowest form of humor.

A badly beaten Albus Dumbledore stumbled into the hospital wing and called out to the school nurse.

"Headmaster?" Madame Pomfrey's eyes widened in shock. "What has happened to you?"

"I find myself in need of your able assistance," the Headmaster replied. "I was involved in a scuffle at my brother's place of business."

"How did this happen?" The nurse asked as she began applying healing charms, "who would do such a thing?"

"Well . . . I was watching the bar as a favor to my brother Aberforth when a bunch of dwarfs walked in," the Headmaster began."

"And?" Pomfrey prompted.

"And the sat at the bar and ordered a bottle of hiskey," Albus continued. "When I refused to serve them they got a bit . . . high spirited and what you see is the result."

"But why would you refuse to serve them?" Pomfrey asked in shock.

"It was because of the way they were dressed," Albus replied.

"The way they were dressed?" Pofrey said slowly, "how would that have anything to do with it?"

"I may not be a full time bartender," Dumbledore replied quickly. "But even I know that it's against the law to serve miners."

Omake: Working in Shifts

"Parvati," Harry called out. "Can I talk with you for a moment?"

"What do you want?" Parvati replied quickly.

"I just wanted to apologize for the way I acted at the Yule ball," Harry explained. "It was wrong of me to act that way and I should have paid more attention to you, especially since I was lucky enough to have such a pretty witch as my date."

"You think I'm pretty?" Parvati's tone warmed up, "I accept your apology with one condition."

"What?"

"You must give me some good dates to make up for the bad one." The girl said with a smile, "is that acceptable to you?"

"It is," Harry answered. "When do you want to have our first date?"

"Right now," Parvati replied. "We can go out walking on the castle grounds."

"Sure," Harry agreed.

The young couple spent the next hour walking around the castle grounds and eventually made their way back to the entrance hall.

"I had a great time Harry," Parvati said with a grin. "I shall look forward to our next date with great anticipation."

"Me too," Harry agreed quickly. "When do you want to meet?"

"How about the same time tomorrow?" Parvati suggested.

"Sure," Harry replied.

"See you then," Parvati said with a grin. Blushing, the girl gave Harry a quick kiss on the lips and then darted out of the room.

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"How was it?" Padma greeted her sister as she entered the room.

"Much better than the ball," Parvati replied. "I think he could be a great boyfriend."

"Mind sharing?" Padma asked with a raised eyebrow. "The pickings are rather slim in this castle."

"That they are," Parvati agreed. "And I don't think it will be too arduous to share with you. We are sisters, and we share everything else."

"Thank you," Padma said with a grateful smile. "So tell me all the details."

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Harry paced nervously as he waited for his date to arrive. A thousand thoughts raced through his mind, chief among them was his worry

that she had changed her mind or chosen not to come to get him back for his earlier behavior.

"There you are," Padma called out. "I'm sorry I'm late but I wanted to look my best."

"That's ok," Harry replied with a relieved smile. "I'm just glad you could come."

"I wouldn't miss it," Padma said.

"There's something different about you Parvati," Harry mused.

"Why would you say that?" Padma replied nervously.

"I don't know, I just . . . you did something with your hair?" Harry asked with false confidence.

"I'm so glad you noticed," Padma said with a relieved smile. "You're such a good boyfriend."

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AN: Yes, the Patil twins have decided to work Harry in shifts and no they haven't told him about the fact that they're sharing him. I was thinking about turning this into a story or a full sized chapter but I really don't feel the urge to start another project.

AN 02: Had to use something as filler and I figured a few omakes would be best, I had em' laying around and I figured that I might as well use them. I was shocked by the amount of people that didn't recognise the cross in the last chapter and the beginning of this one, 'Mary Poppins' I may be getting on in years but I'm not that old am I?

## Dobby Saves the Day

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The war was going badly and the light saw only one hope to win, a crazy desperate hope that had only a snowball's chance of succeeding. They would send back their greatest warrior, a warrior that had been forged in the fires of war and tempered by the fact that he was the sole survivor of what had once been a mighty army.

"Dobby did it," the little elf cheered. "Dobby is back in time." Let's just say that casualties were more severe then the public had been led to believe.

"What are you muttering about you stupid elf?" Lucius growled.

"Shut up," Dobby said happily. "Dobby has to rebuild a happy memory now," the little elf explained.

"Whurk," Lucius . . . gurgled? I'm not sure that's the right word but screw it, not like anyone will care . . . well maybe some people will care but I'm just too tired to make the effort to look up something else. I'm tired and my feet hurt, stupid work, stupid not being rich.

"Hee hee hee," Dobby giggled. "You is a bad death eater. Dobby is sorry, but he has to put you down now." War had hardened the little elf.

"What?" Lucius's eyes widened in fear, "house elves can't kill people."

"Hee hee hee," Dobby giggled again. "You had a funny look on your face. Dobby is just kidding." Just kidding, Dobby is Dobby no matter what. A homicidal house elf would be fun, but that's not this story. "Dobby has to change your memory."

"House elves can't do that sort of magic," Lucius said arrogantly. "Now go flog yourself for bothering me and if you're lucky I won't have you gelded."

"You is right," Dobby agreed. "So Dobby won't use magic to modify your memory."



"Then what . . . " Lucius cut off when he noticed the large club in house elf's small hands. "Oh hell."

One savage beating later and Dobby was ready to start the next stage of his plan.

"Dobby is ready to start the next phase of his plan," Dobby cheered. The little house elf popped out of the Malfoy home and to the Potter home, the ancestral Potter home that was never mentioned in the books because . . . I said so.

"Who is you?" An ancient voice demanded.

"Dobby is Dobby," Dobby replied. "Who is you?"

"Sneezy is Sneezy," a very old house elf replied. "Where is Harry Potter sir?"

"Harry Potter sir is in a bad place," Dobby said sadly. "But we can not rescue him because it would destroy his wards."

"Not rescue Harry Potter sir?"

"But we'z can make Harry Potter sir's life better," Dobby replied.

"Sneezy will find Harry Potter sir a wife," Sneezy volunteered.

"Dobby likes Harry Potter sir's Hermy," Dobby suggested.

"Is Harry Potter sir's Hermy a pureblood?" Sneezy asked.

"No," Dobby replied. "Harry Potter sir's Hermy is not a nasty pureblood."

"Sneezy wants a pureblood," Sneezy replied. "Harry Potter sir must have a pureblood."

"Dobby doesn't like purebloods," Dobby said. "Harry Potter sir should have his Hermy."

"Sneezy has been breeding Potter sirs for years," Sneezy said. "Sneezy thinks a pureblood is the right thing to add to the line."

"Dobby thinks Harry Potter sir's Hermy is good," Dobby maintained. "She is kind and smart and nice."

"James Potter sir's Silly Lilly was good," Sneezy allowed. "It is too bad that there are not more Potter sirs, we could have a contest to see which was a better wife."

"You is a genius," Dobby said happily. "We needs more Potter sirs and we need a contest."

"And it will make more Potter sirs," Sneezy agreed. "I will get a pureblood and you will get Harry Potter sir's Hermy."

"Dobby must make Harry Potter sir's life better now," Dobby said sadly. "So Dobby must wait for later."

"Harry Potter sir is more important." Sneezy agreed.

"Dobby is going now," Dobby said and popped out.

"Sneezy must find a pureblood for Harry Potter sir," Sneezy mused. "Sneezy knows it, Loveygoods are great wizards, Sneezy will get one of those." With that decided, Sneezy popped to the nearest location he could sense Loveygoods. Sneezy appeared before a small blond crying girl and decided to take a moment to plot out his next move. "What is wrong?"

"There's something wrong with mummy," the small girl replied between sobs.

"Sneezy will look," Sneezy looked past the little girl to see an older blond laying on the ground. "Does little blond girl want Sneezy to make everything better?"

"Make mummy better," Luna ordered.

"Ok," Sneezy agreed. With a snap of his might fingers, the woman was well again. "All done."

"Who are you?" Luna's mother asked weakly.

"Sneezy is Sneezy," the house elf replied. "Is you ok now?"

"I think so," the woman agreed. "What are you doing here."

"Sneezy came to find a Lovegood girl," Sneezy replied.

"Why'd you do that?" A calming Luna managed to whisper.

"Sneezy thinks there need to be more Potter sirs," Sneezy replied.  
"And Sneezy thinks that a Lovegood would be good for Harry Potter sir."

IIIIIIII

"Mum, dad." Dudley was also sobbing.

"What is it son?" Vernon asked, "did that little freak bother you?"

"No," Dudders managed to croak.

"Then what is it?" Petunia asked as she took Dudley into her arms.

"There's an evil monkey that lives in my closet," Dudley explained.

"What?" Vernon asked flatly.

"There's an evil monkey in my closet," Dudley repeated. "I don't wanna live in that room any more."

"That's fine darling," Petunia replied. "We'll move you to the guest room."

"And I'll go up and give that monkey a good thrashing," Vernon added.  
"And maybe that little freak too, I'm sure this is all his doing."

"Ok I . . ." Dudley's eyes widened in fear as he saw Dobby glaring at him from the staircase, finger and arm extended. "Don't want the freak to get hit, make him live with the evil monkey."

"Son I . . ." Vernon began.

"Make him live with the evil monkey," Dudley's whiny demand interrupted his father.

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AN: Dobby goes back in time, I don't believe I've seen this one.

## The Last Straw

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It was a normal day at Hogwarts and Harry was watching a scene that had been repeated many times in the years Harry had attended the school. Draco loomed over a couple first year students and though Harry could not hear the words coming out of the other boy's mouth, he could very well guess their meaning.

It hadn't been an easy year for Harry, come to think of it it hadn't been an easy life. Since the death of his parents, one tragedy had followed another indignity and Harry was fast approaching his limit. His rage felt like a torrent of water was being held behind his scar and as he watched, the pressure grew and grew until the dam burst and something within Harry snapped.

"THAT IS IT," Harry stormed over to where Draco was tormenting the first years and grabbed the other boy by the shoulder. "Malfoy, if I see you doing that again then I'm going to break something of yours. I think I'll start with your feet and work my way up until you learn some bloody manners."

"Mister Potter," McGonagall had arrived. "What do you think you're doing?"

"Explaining the facts of life to Draco here," Harry tightened his grip on the other boy's shoulder. "I told him that I would hurt him severely if I found him tormenting another first year, or anyone else for that matter."

"There will be no fighting in this school Mr. Potter," McGonagall looked stern. "If Mr. Malfoy was misbehaving. Next time tell a teacher and they will handle it."

"Are you willing to swear a wizard's oath, or in your case a witch's oath on that?" Harry said with an annoyed grin.

"What?" McGonagall squawked, the old woman looked ready to explode. "Why would you ask for such a thing."

"It's just . . . well, no teacher has ever bothered to punish him or make any attempts to curb his behavior before." Harry shrugged, "permit me to be a bit sceptical that you would start now."

"WHAT?" Minerva was stunned, "why would you say something like that."

"I am sick and tired of the fact that you can get away with anything in this school if your name is Malfoy," Harry's face was red with rage. "From now on the teachers can go to hell if they think they can tell me what to do, you wanna expel me? Fine, I'm sure that there are a dozen other magical schools that would be thrilled to have 'the famous Harry Potter' as one of their students."

"If you think you can . . ."

"Do your job?" Harry interrupted, "I don't know. You aren't doing it, Snape sure as hell ain't doing it. So why not me?"

"Go to the Headmaster's office immediately," McGonagall commanded. Her face was purpling with rage. "Maybe he can talk some sense into you."

"Maybe he could do his job too," Harry retorted. "Instead of covering for Snape or making my life a living hell."

"If you think you can talk to me that . . ."

"This conversation is over," Harry interrupted. "I doubt that you have anything intelligent to add, and with my new duties I don't have the time to waste on idle chit chat."

"Harry why . . ."

"Remember what I said Malfoy," Harry ignored his head of house. "Unless you want to get to know the hospital wing as well as I do . . . remember what I said."

With that last comment, Harry turned and stalked down the hallway.

"I'll just be going then," Draco smiled weakly and began walking in the opposite direction.

"Not so fast Mr. Malfoy," Minerva's sharp voice forced the boy. "I have some things I want to discuss with you."

"Yes Professor?" The blond tried to smile innocently.

"What were you doing with those first years?"

"I was just showing them to their class rooms," Draco smiled. "I didn't want them to get lost."

"Is that true?" McGonagall turned to the two first years.

"No Professor," the first years shook their heads. "He was saying that the dark lord would kill our families"

"What?" Draco's face turned red, "just you wait. I'm gonna . . ."

"Have Harry beat you up if you try anything," one of the first years interrupted. "You can't do anything to us anymore."

"What did you mean anymore," McGonagall didn't like the implications.

"It doesn't matter if Snape covers for him anymore," the first year smiled. "Harry will get him anyway."

"I see," McGonagall was not happy with the way the conversation was going. "Thank you, you may go. Have your Professor see me if you're late for class."

"Thank you Professor," the two first years rushed off.

"As for you," McGonagall glared at Malfoy. "You're coming with me."

"Shouldn't you get my Head of House?" Malfoy asked nervously.

"That's another week of detention for questioning a Professor," McGonagall replied calmly. "Assuming I don't get you expelled."

"You can't do this," Draco was shocked at the course of events. "My father's on the board of governors."

"I am the Deputy Headmistress," McGonagall frowned. "And as such I have the ability to give punishments to students, three more months detention."

"We'll see about this," Draco sulked.

"Keep it up Mr. Malfoy," Minerva smiled. "And I'll run out of time this year and have to start on the next."

Draco finally started showing the cunning attributed to his House and chose not to reply to the Professor's comments.

"Good day Mr. Malfoy," Minerva turned and began to walk away. "I'll expect to see you in detention tonight, I'm sure the grounds keeper has several unpleasant tasks for you to perform."

The Professor made her way to the Headmaster's office and framed him with a worried stare.

"What is it Minerva?" Dumbledore smiled.

"We have a problem."

"What is it?" Dumbledore tossed another lemon drop in his mouth.

"Harry no longer respects us," Minerva explained. The woman's face twisted into a frown. "I caught him threatening Mr. Malfoy in the hall."

"I'll speak with him," Dumbledore promised. "I'm sure that we can have everything wrapped up by dinner."

"You don't understand, I told him to see you and he refused." McGonagall looked worried, "He said that if we're unwilling to do our jobs then he's going to do them for us."

"I can't believe that it's gotten that bad," Dumbledore smiled. "I'm sure that he'll cool off if we give him enough time."



"You're living in a fantasy world if you believe that Albus," Minerva shook her head sadly. "I talked to a couple of first years and they said that they weren't afraid to speak out now that Harry is going to protect them, they said that Harry won't care about the protection that Severus gives to his house."

"They said that?" Dumbledore asked in horrified shock.

"They don't have any confidence that we'll protect them," Minerva agreed. "They seem to think that you can do anything you want in this school so long as your name is Malfoy, an attitude that Mr. Malfoy seemed to share."

"How did things get so bad?" Dumbledore asked with a wince.

"At a guess?" McGonagall replied, "it started when you allowed Severus free reign over his students."

"I did what I thought was necessary at the time," Dumbledore protested. "Can you forgive an old man his mistakes?"

"I can," McGonagall agreed with a sigh. "But I don't think Harry will. I fear that things have progressed too far for that."

"I see," Dumbledore said. The old man slumped back in his chair and looked lost. "What do you think I should do Minerva?"

"To start with, I think you should have a talk with Severus," Minerva replied, "perhaps if you were to begin transforming the school back into a more congenial environment then Harry will no longer see the need to enforce discipline."

"Perhaps," Dumbledore agreed. "Thank you for bringing this to me Minerva, I don't know how I let things get so bad but rest assured that I am going to fix them."

"I'm afraid it might be too late Albus," Minerva said with a wince.

"That may be," Dumbledore agreed. "But I still have hope that things will get better."

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Harry walked through the halls, dispensing justice like an angry god. Many of the older students cowered at his approach while many of the younger students seemed to bask in his presence, they were finally safe.

"Potter," Snape yelled. The man had been searching for the last Potter since Draco had come to him and told him what happened. "I've been looking for you."

"There you are you greasy son of a bitch," Harry growled at Snape's approach.

"A years detention and I'm going to see if I can't have you expelled for what you did to young Draco," Snape screamed. "You've finally given me what I need to put you in your place you arrogant twit."

"You know, I've always heard that bullies were cowards." Harry said to the delight of the listening students. "Let's find out shall we? Severus Snape, I challenge you to a duel."

"To death or surrender," Snape agreed with a grin of triumph. "I'll have you begging me to make it stop, I'll break you before . . ."

"Shut up," Harry said with a yawn. "And be ready by the end of evening meals in the Great Hall."

"Show some respect Potter," Snape growled.

"To you?" Harry laughed, "not in a thousand years."

The students watched in shock as Harry shoved his way past the Potions Professor and continued his rounds.

As the hours passed, stories of what had happened spread like wildfire. Many waited in anticipation the majority hoping to see Snape carried out of the hall and unable to work for months and a minority hoping to see the Potter boy put in his place.

Ignoring the whispers, Harry entered the great hall and took his customary seat between his two oldest friends.

"Hey guys," Harry said quietly. "Haven't seen you all day."

"About that Harry," Hermione began. "There are some rumors that you're going to fight a duel with Snape."

"Yup," Harry agreed. "Spent the last few hours in the library preparing for it."

"Bloody brilliant mate," Ron cheered. "Bust him up good for me 'eh."

"Be quiet Ron," Hermione snapped. "You can't do this Harry, he's a teacher."

"He's not a teacher," Harry disagreed. "He never taught me anything . . . cept maybe that people in positions of authority can't be trusted."

"He's got years of experience," Hermione tried a different approach. "You can't win against him."

"He's a Potions Master," Harry said with a smile. "Not a duelist, I'll be fine."

"Well why don't you postpone the duel for a few weeks," Hermione suggested desperately. "I'll help you study so that you can be sure that you'll win, you'll know so many spells that it'll take days to cast them all."

"Can't be put off," Harry replied. "But I will take you up on the offer to help me study if it's still open, could help with future duels."

"You don't have to do this," Hermione's voice was beginning to sound panicked. "You've proven your point."

"I do have to do this," Harry disagreed. "And I realise that you just don't want me to get hurt, why don't the two of us have a nice long talk after this."

"Ok," Hermione agreed weakly.

"Anywhere you want me to hit him for you Ron?" Harry asked his other friend.

"Anywheres fine," Ron replied. The boy had been strangely silent as he watched Hermione get more and more worried as she realized that she couldn't stop Harry. "If he gets you I'll get him mate."

"Thanks Ron," Harry said. "But no thanks, I can do whatever I want to him cause of the dueling code. You aren't protected by it and you'd have to face your mother afterwards."

"Then I'll challenge him myself," Ron replied. "But only if it comes to that, I'd really rather see you beat the stuffing out of him Harry."

"And this way you don't have to face your mum," Hermione added with a weak smile. "Don't get hurt Harry."

"Yeah mate," Ron agreed. "And bust Snape up really good."

"I will," Harry promised. Taking one last bit of food, Harry stood up and walked to the center of the Great Hall. "Ready Snape?"

"I can't wait to have you in front of my wand Potter," Snape said with his trademarked sneer.

"Might I have a moment of your time Harry?" Dumbledore asked quickly.

"I'm a bit busy at the moment," Harry replied. Even as he spoke, Harry's eyes refused to leave Snape's face. "Perhaps later."

"This won't take long," Dumbledore pleaded. "You'll have plenty of time for . . . the other thing."

"What do you need?" Harry's eyes flicked over to regard the Headmaster.

"If you'll just come with me to this corner over here for a bit of privacy . . ." Dumbledore said nervously.

"Fine," Harry agreed.

The two of them walked over to the indicated corner and Harry watched in fascination as the Headmaster cast several charms to insure that their conversation would not be overheard.

"Harry," Dumbledore began kindly. "You can't duel Professor Snape."

"Really?" Harry raised an eyebrow, "and why pray tell is that?"

"He's a teacher," Dumbledore replied quickly. "And it wouldn't do to have students challenging their Professors."

"As I told Hermione, Snape never taught me a thing." Harry said with a predatory grin. "And I think you'll find that according to the school regulations, a student can challenge a Professor but Professors can not challenge students."

"Be that as it may," Dumbledore said. His mind frantically sought a new avenue of conversation, Minerva was right . . . this wouldn't be as easy as he had originally hoped. "I wanted to talk with you to dissuade you from your new self imposed duty, it really isn't necessary for you to keep the school safe."

"I could care less about the school," Harry said with a shrug. "It's the students I'm concerned with. On the one hand you have Snape and his band of idiots and on the other you have well . . . you."

"Me?" Dumbledore asked in surprise.

"I'm sure you don't mean to endanger the students," Harry said with a knowing grin. "And I'm also sure that you don't bother to consider them when you're planning your schemes."

"My schemes?" Dumbledore echoed.

"You're not as bad as Snape's bunch but you have your moments," Harry explained. "Only you would consider hiding the thing Voldemort wants most in a school full of children and only you would protect it with lethal traps that endangered those same children. Did any of the other Professors think that was a bad idea?"

"Minerva might have said something," Dumbledore said weakly.

"Then there's the fact that you don't bother investigating things, the troll, the snake, etc." Harry went on, "you hire incompetents and death eaters . . . well, you get the idea."

"Yes well," Dumbledore said with a wince.

"And if you'll excuse me," Harry said mildly. "I have a duel to get to."

"I can't persuade you not to do this?" Dumbledore asked sadly.

"Snape needs to be taught a lesson," Harry agreed. "And it comes to me to be the teacher."

"I've talked with him Harry," Dumbledore begged. "You don't have to do this, call off the duel."

"No," Harry replied. "I don't think I'm going to be doing that."

"There's no need for you to do this," Dumbledore continued. "You've proven your point."

"I will agree to call off the duel if Snape goes to the center of the room and begs my forgiveness for what he's done to me," Harry replied. "Then he must beg forgiveness from every other student at Hogwarts and swear on his magic that he will never do such a thing again. He must then resign from the post of Potions Professor and promise never to take students again."

"I don't think . . ." Dumbledore began.

"I realise that but I am not finished," Harry said sharply. "Then he must get on his knees and beg me for mercy and ask me to call things off. I will consider calling off the duel at that point."

"Severus will never agree to that," Dumbledore protested. "Be reasonable."

"I'm being much more reasonable then he would be if he were in my place," Harry replied evenly. "So unless you have something useful to add then I suggest that you leave."

"The school is going to get better," Dumbledore replied. "There is no need for you to act this way, you've won Harry."

"Empty platitudes from a man that lies so much that he doesn't know what the truth is," Harry said dismissively. "Why should I trust you when you've done nothing but lie and mislead me? Why should I trust you when you seem to think that withholding the truth should be done as early and as often as possible?"

"I only had your best interests at heart," Dumbledore protested.

"My best interests?" Harry asked incredulously, "if you did all these things with my 'best interests' at heart then I would be horrified to see what you'd do to someone you wanted dead. What did you really do to that Dark Lord you killed? How long did it take before you finally allowed him to die? I guess we can now see why Voldemort is so afraid of you, he doesn't want to be tortured to death."

"Harry I . . ." Dumbledore felt ill, "is that how you truly see me?"

"What I see is a pathetic old man that believes that cloaking himself in the excuse of the 'greater good' will allow him to commit any crime he wishes." Harry spat, "you condemned me to years of torture when you put me with the Dursleys. You created a school where one can commit any crime so long as one's name is Malfoy and where you can be subjected any indignity if your name is Potter. You created a school where Professors neglect their duties in favor of perusing personal vendettas against the students. You are not someone I want anything to do with."

"Harry . . . I'm sorry," Dumbledore's voice choked up. "Can you ever forgive me?"

"Why should I?" Harry asked sarcastically.

"I . . ."

"Now if you'll excuse me," Harry ignored the Headmaster's attempts to speak. "I have no desire to listen to any more of your attempts to justify your actions and I do not wish to be late to my duel."

Harry ignored the Headmaster's calls and strode into the middle of the room, "ready Sevvie?"

"Make your peace Potter," Snape said with a grin.

"Would you be our witness Professor Flitwick?" Harry asked the small Professor, "you're the closest thing I can find to neutral and you do know about dueling."

"I can't persuade either of you to put aside this nonsense?" Professor Flitwick asked sadly. Both Harry and Snape shook their heads. "Very well." The small Professor waved his wand and to create a large powerful shield to block off the students, "you may begin."

Snape began the duel by throwing a large mass of black light. Harry dodged and replied with a powerful cutting curse to the smarmy man's wand arm, another cutting curse rendered the man's other arm useless. Ten seconds had passed since the first spell had been flung and the students watched in fascination as Harry approached his fallen opponent.

"Looks like I win," Harry said happily. "Give up?"

"Go to hell Potter," Snape groaned.

"I was hoping you'd say that," Harry said with a grin. Everyone in the Great Hall watched in shock as Harry raised his wand and hit Snape with a series of dark and painful hexes.

"Damn you Potter," Snape hissed through clenched teeth. By reply, Harry began casting higher level curses and Snape soon began screaming.

"Do you like it?" Harry asked over Snape's screams. "I spent all day in the library researching pain curses, I wanted to give you a little taste of how good a student I could be if given the proper motivation."



The students watched in horrified fascination as their most hated professor suffered unspeakable agony.

"Not as skillful as you would do it," Harry said conversationally. "I'm willing to admit that, but I'm sure that you'll agree that I did a good job with what I had."

"Damn you Potter," Snape groaned.

"Harry stop this," Dumbledore called out. "He's beaten."

"To death or surrender," Harry replied with a grin. "He said that he would have me begging to make it stop and I feel no regret in returning the favor."

"You must stop this," Dumbledore begged.

"So you want me to kill him then?" Harry shrugged, "if you wish." Harry raised his wand so that it was pointing to the space right between the Potions Master's eyes, "reduc . . ."

"Stop," Snape screamed. "I surrender, I give up, just don't kill me."

"Pity," Harry said as he stepped over the sobbing Potions Professor. The students watched in shock as Harry walked away from the broken man and out of the great hall. In an instant, the old paradigm had been shattered, only time would show what form the new would take.

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AN: I can think of a couple reasons why Harry is acting the way that he is. One of them is influence from Voldemort, either accidental or by design. Another is that after years of being treated like garbage, Harry snapped and is being controlled by his rage. The third is a mix of the first and second, for some reason Harry's negative emotions were muted. Possibly by Dumbledore trying to insure that Harry would not be influenced by the scar, the charms were not designed to last forever and they were not designed to hold back so much rage so the burst. Not really sure, just writing this to get it out of my head.

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Omake: Potion

"Why is this happening to me?" Harry moaned. "Why can't I control my rage?"

"Dobby knows Harry Potter sir," the small elf said quietly to announce his presence.

"Tell me Dobby," Harry begged.

"Harry Potter sir's food was dosed with calming potions since he came to Hoggywarts," Dobby replied quietly. "Dobby found out about it and changed the potions out with sugar water . . . Dobby is sorry Harry Potter sir."

"Thank you Dobby," Harry's reply surprised the small elf. "You freed me, you're a good and loyal friend."

"Thank you Harry Potter sir." Dobby perked up a bit.

AN: I might use this, or I might write a bunch other omakes about possible causes or I might do nothing with this story, don't really have anymore plans.

Life is Good

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Albus was in a bind, on the one hand his presence was required at Hogwarts and on the other hand the fifteenth annual sock convention was taking place in Los Vegas. It was dangerous to leave Hogwarts unattended in this troubled time and he just couldn't miss the convention, he'd heard that they were going to be announcing something new and exciting. And so he was going to do what any reasonable man would do in this situation . . .

"What can I do for you Albus?" Aberforth asked with a grin.

"I was wondering if you could do me a favor," Albus replied. "Nothing too difficult."

. . . he was going to get his brother to assume his identity.

|||||

"You wanted to see me Headmaster?" Harry asked.

"Yes I did," the Headmaster agreed. "I've been rereading my journals and it has come to my attention that my bro . . . I mean, that I am a jerk. What kind of man locks a boy away with a group of magic hating muggles?"

"I'm sure you had your reasons sir," Harry said in shock. "I forgive you."

"And I'm just as sure that my reasons were bad," the Headmaster replied. "So I'm going to make it up to you."

"Thank you sir," Harry said with a smile. "I really appreciate it."

"Tell me Harry," the old man began. "Have you ever been to Amsterdam?"

|||||

Harry was in a state of shock when he stumbled back into the Gryffindor common room later that day. Ignoring the other students, he headed straight to his favorite seat in front of the fireplace and stared at the flames.

"Harry what did the Headmaster want?" Hermione called out as her friend walked into the room. "Why won't you answer me?"

"He said I needed to learn to have fun," said an extremely red Harry.

"And?" Hermione asked, she really didn't see what the big deal was.

"Then we zipped over to Amsterdam," Harry continued. "And he hired me a bunch of hookers . . . I didn't do anything so he pulled out the polyjuice."

"Polyjuice?" Hermione asked in a low dangerous voice.

"There were three of you, two Lunas, and . . . well . . . you get the idea." Harry replied.

"Way ta go mate," Ron said enthusiastically. "I can't . . ." Hermione's growl silenced Ron and made him rethink his plan of giving Harry a high five.

"What did you do?" Hermione growled.

"He said I can have a night off and then he expects me to meet him in the morning," Harry ignored his fuming friend. "He didn't say what we were going to do."

"I asked you a question," Hermione growled.

"Well," Ron said slowly. He had come to the conclusion that ignoring Hermione was the best course of action here. "Have fun mate."

"Harry," Hermione's voice was low and dangerous. "I asked what you did and you haven't answered me."

"Well," Harry said as he stood up. "I'm going to bed, night Ron, night Hermione."

|||||

Harry woke early the next morning to avoid meeting Hermione in the common room and snuck down stairs to meet with the Headmaster.

"Eager to get started?" The old man asked with a grin, "good."

"I guess," Harry said slowly. "What are we going to do today?"

"Harry my boy," Dumbledore said with a grin. "It's time you learned how to gamble."

"No sir," Harry replied.

"Then I think it's high time you learned then isn't it?"

|||||

The scene from the night before repeated itself as Harry wandered into the Gryffindor common room with a look of confusion on his face.

"What was it today mate?" Ron demanded.

"Monte Carlo," Harry replied. "The Headmaster wanted me to learn how to gamble."

"Well I hope you learned your lesson," Hermione said smugly.

"I did," Harry agreed. "If I ever need money, there's no easier way than to hit a casino."

"Exact . . . what?" Hermione asked in shock.

"It's so easy," Harry enthused. "A little simple math and the ability to read body language and you have half the games wrapped up, when you add in a bit of magic . . ."

"You cheated?" Hermione screamed.

"It's not cheating in the magical section," Harry explained. "It's part of the gamble, you automatically loose if they catch you and you

automatically win if they don't. Security gets better as the pot increases."

"I don't think that's the way it works Harry," Hermione said gently.

"It is," Harry replied confidently. "Least that's what the head of security said when he offered me a job."

"Wicked," Ron said.

"Job?" Hermione asked dumbly.

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "Just as soon as I graduate."

And so it continued, Harry was finally having fun. The next day saw a trip to a distillery and a brewery on the next. Harry didn't want things to end, unfortunately they did.

"It's good to be back," Albus said as he entered the castle. "That sock convention was one of the best ones yet."

"Dobby thinks so too," the little house elf agreed.

"I wonder if anything happened while I was gone," Dumbledore mused. "Must have been quiet, Aberforth would have contacted me otherwise."

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AN: Yeah I wrote this, bug woop wanna fight about it.

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Omake: The Anti Senility Charm . . .

Harry had spent weeks in the library researching a way solve the majority of his problems and he thought he had it in the form of a charm. A charm so powerful that it was considered not somewhat powerful, not really powerful, not even really very powerful. For it was a charm that was considered really super very really very super ned powerful and stuff.

It took Harry two . . . let's say minutes to learn the charm and then he put his invisibility cloak on . . . then he came to the realisation that it

would be useless in the culmination of his plan so he took it off . . . then he figured what the hell, I'll use it out of sentimental reasons so he put it back on. This sequence of events lasted for twelve hours and it was a very tired, one would even go so far as to say really very somewhat tired Harry Potter that wondered down to the great hall for breakfast.

"Hello Harry," Dumbledore called out when he noticed Harry's approach. "Some reason you've decided to wrap your invisibility cloak around your waist like a kilt?"

"Anti Senility," Harry cast his newest spell at the surprised Headmaster. The effects were immediate, Dumbledore fell to the ground clutching his head, Snape said that Harry was just like his fater, McGonagall took points for assaulting the Headmaster without a good reason, the Ministry said that Harry was an attention seeker, and the Prophet declared him the next dark lord . . . I think you get the picture.

After a few minutes of projectile vomiting, the Headmaster rose to his feet and appealed for calm.

"I appeal for calm," the Headmaster called out.

"Sure thing," everyone except Snape agreed (he was in the middle of a good rant and didn't want to stop for fear of losing his train of thought)

"Did it work?" Harry asked eagerly.

"I'm afraid it did," Dumbledore agreed. "What was I thinking putting a young child in an abusive home without checking on him even once, any idiot could have figured out a way to keep all those death eaters out of Hogwarts . . . don't worry Harry, I'm going to go vanquish the dark lord and then I'm going to make this castle a safe and happy place to learn."

"Rock on," Harry screamed out. "Let's all have an orgy." And they did, and they all lived happily ever after . . . except Voldemort of course because he was vanquished.

## Let Them Eat Cake

Tears flowed down Harry's cheeks as he listened to Sirius's will wind to a close.

"And to my godson Harry Potter," the Solicitor read. "I leave my fortune, the remainder of my possessions, and my position as head of the Black family."

"What?" The matron of the Malfoy family paled, "oh Sirius why?"

"That mutt had no right to give Potter my money," Draco agreed. "I demand . . ."

"Be quiet Draco," Narcissa snapped. "For once in your life be quiet."

"Mother I . . ." Draco stammered.

"Please forgive him," Narcissa ignored her son and turned to Harry. "He takes after his father and I'm afraid that I haven't been as good a mother as I should have been, I beg you hold off judgement until after I've had a chance to exert my influence upon him."

"Sure," replied an amused and confused Harry. "I guess so."

"Thank you," Narcissa nodded and swept out of the room trailed by her only son.

"Mother what was . . ."

"Quiet Draco," Narcissa's voice was full of barely suppressed rage. "I have allowed your father to have a free hand in your upbringing long enough, to think that you almost . . . just be quiet and come along."

"Yes mother," Draco agreed meekly.

"And don't dawdle," Narcissa called over her shoulder. "We have to get home soon so I can get some business conducted."

"Yes mother," Draco said quietly.



The Malfoys walked out of Gringotts and towards the nearest public floo connection.

"You go first," Narcissa commanded.

"Why can't we use a portkey?" Draco whined.

"I told you to do something," Narcissa said calmly. "And you haven't done it, should I conclude that you didn't hear me the first time or should I conclude that you need to be punished more than I had originally thought?"

"I'm going," Draco said quickly.

"Good." Narcissa watched her son disappear into the flames and soon followed. Deep in thought, she nearly lost her footing when she exited in the Malfoy family sitting room. "Go to your room Draco," She said without looking at her child. "We'll speak later."

"Yes mother"

Narcissa waited until her child left the room before casting a handful of floo powder into the flames. "Bella, I need you."

"What is it Cissy?" Her sister's face appeared. "Has that husband of yours gone too far?"

"He and I are going to have a little talk about how our son has been raised but I don't need you to do anything about him yet," Narcissa replied with a fond smile. "It's about Harry Potter."

"What about him?" Bellatrix asked harshly.

"He's the new head of the Black family," Narcissa said dryly.

"I see," Bellatrix said calmly. "Have you arranged a suitable match?"

"I thought it best to consult you and Andy before I did that," Narcissa replied. "After all, you both have a stake in this."

"I haven't seen Andy in . . . quite some time," Bellatrix said in delight. "I'm coming through."

Narcissa stepped back and watched her sister step through the fire, "should we call ahead or just show up on her doorstep?" She said with a smile.

"Andy and I weren't on the best of terms the last time we spoke," Bellatrix said with a wince. "I think it'd be best to surprise her."

"I agree," Narcissa spoke slowly. "Follow me," she commanded as she stepped through the fireplace.

"Hello Andy," Narcissa said to her surprised sister. "Long time."

"Cissy?" Andromeda said in shock, "Bella . . . it's come to this then, you're going to kill me."

"We intend to do no such thing," Narcissa said sharply. "Do we Bella?"

"Of course not," Bellatrix agreed. "Besides, with you on this side it insures that the family survives no matter who wins."

"It may sound strange," Andromeda said slowly. "But it's good to see you both, I missed you."

"And we you," Narcissa replied. "We shall have to do this again after we've finished with our business."

"We could make it a point to have tea every week," Bellatrix offered.

"Tea?" Andromeda asked with a raised eyebrow.

"I like tea," Bella defended herself.

"As do I," Narcissa agreed. "How is young Dora?"

"Still insisting that we call her by her family name," Andy said with an exasperated sigh. "I give her a fine first name and what does she do?"

"She'll come around," Bella comforted her sister. "I'm sure it's just a phase she's going through."

"That's not the worst of it," Andy said with a sigh. "She's decided that she's in love with that werewolf friend of Sirius's."

"You want me to do something about that?" Bella asked innocently.

"No need," Andy said quickly. "He has no intention of allowing things to proceed. Ted spoke with him and he said that even without mentioning the whole werewolf thing, that he was too old for her."

"It's good for a young girl to pine after an older man," Narcissa spoke up. "So long as the older man isn't the sort to take advantage of the situation."

"Getting back to the subject," Andromeda spoke suddenly. "Why did the two of you decide to visit?"

"Harry Potter," Bellatrix replied.

"What about him?"

"He's the new head of the Black family," Narcissa explained. "And we thought it best to seek your aid."

"In finding him a suitable match," Andy finished. "Of course I'll help sister dear."

"What about that daughter of yours?" Bellatrix suggested, "she's the only female in the proper age group with any Black blood."

"But she's also a half blood," Narcissa added. "No offence Andy dear."

"None taken," Andromeda replied. "Though it would keep her from getting her heart broken in a bad relationship, I've heard from Molly that the Potter boy is quite sweet."

"The Weasleys are a possibility," Narcissa mused. "They do have a daughter."

"I don't know if I want to inflict Molly as a mother in law on the poor boy," Andromeda said with a grin.

The three sisters debated the issue for hours, rejecting several families for being 'too light' or 'too dark' until finally Narcissa offered a suggestion.

"What about the Lovegood girl?" Narcissa said suddenly. "She's open minded, pureblood, and won't try to kill any of us out of hand. Besides, I always liked her hair."

"Isn't that family a bit . . ." Bellatrix pointed to her ear and made a circular motion with her finger.

"I've heard that she's very loyal to her friends," Andromeda said, biting her tongue to prevent herself from mentioning that Bellatrix was the last person that should be questioning someone's sanity.

"And she's also one of the Potter boy's friends," Narcissa settled the issue. "Either of you disagree?"

"No"

"Nope"

"Then let us be off," Narcissa said. "Andy, would you mind making us a Portkey?"

"Of course," Andromeda said with a smile. "What are sisters for?"

Andromeda created the portkey and held it out for her sisters. "Is everyone touching it? Then here we go."

The three sisters landed in front of the Lovegood residence and Bellatrix took the lead. "Allow me," Bella said with a grin. "I'm good with children." Bellatrix walked up to the door and knocked three times.

Luna answered the door and blinked at her visitor. "Ahh Bellatrix Lestrange," Luna said calmly. "Are you here to kill me? Because if you are, I have a cake baking and if you'd be willing to wait a few minutes then I'll share it with you so we can both get a good meal before we fight to the death."

"Why did you scream like that?" Bellatrix asked, "don't get me wrong. I'm use to hearing screams when I show myself but I've never heard someone scream so calmly."

"I don't want to ruin my cake," Luna replied.

"Oh," Bellatrix gave a slow nod. "I guess that makes sense . . . have you met my sisters?"

"Hello Mrs. Malfoy," Luna said politely. "Mrs. Tonks."

"Call me Andy," Andromeda said with a smile.

"And call me Cissy."

"Are you here to kill me too?" Luna asked innocently.

"We aren't here to kill you," Andromeda said firmly.

"Then you're here to seduce me?" Luna said enthusiastically, clapping her hands. "Oh it'll be so much fun."

"We aren't here to seduce you either," Narcissa said calmly.

"Oh poo," Luna said in disappointment. "What are you here for then?"

"What do you think of Harry Potter?" Narcissa asked.

"He's my friend," Luna said calmly. "Why?"

"How'd you like to marry him?" Bellatrix suggested.

"Ok," Luna agreed. "It sounds like it could be fun . . . my cake. Excuse me a moment."

"That went well," Andromeda said as Luna rushed into the house.

"Of course it did," Bellatrix agreed. "She said yes."

"I'm sorry about that," Luna called out. "I forgot all about the cake."

"Perfectly alright," Bellatrix comforted the girl.

"Would the three of you like to come in?" Luna asked politely. "I have a fresh cake and I can't eat all of it myself."

"We'd love to," Narcissa accepted. "So about your marriage to young Mr. Potter."

"I'd like a small wedding," Luna replied. "Just family and a few friends."

"Sensible," Andromeda agreed. "Don't let them make a media event out of it."

"You'll look so beautiful in your wedding dress." Bellatrix smiled, "oh it'll be so much fun."

"Oh poo," Luna said with a frown. "I forgot something."

"What is it dear?"

"Hermione," Luna replied. "Cho says that she's very jealous and territorial, I'll never be able to marry Harry without thinking of some way to neutralising her."

"I'd be happy to take care of that little problem for you Luna," Bellatrix offered.

"That would only make Harry angry with me," Luna declined. "And I want my marriage to work."

"Too much divorce these days," Andy agreed. "It's good to see a girl with some sense."

"Would you be adverse to the idea of allowing Harry to take her as a mistress?" Narcissa asked calmly, "it would solve several problems."

"What a wonderful idea," Luna enthused. "The more the merrier."

"It could also provide you with a way to harness Dora," Bellatrix suggested.

"If I can convince her to agree," Andromeda sighed. "She seems intent on defying me every chance she gets."

"Then forbid her from doing it," Narcissa spoke up.

"That may work," Andromeda mused.

"How do we convince Hermione to Become Harry's mistress?" Bellatrix asked.

"Leave everything to me," Luna said confidently. "The Black family does have an extensive library doesn't it?"

"Yes it does," Narcissa agreed. "Why?"

"Books," Luna explained. "Are Hermione's weakness, if I have enough books then I can bribe her."

"I'll give you the Malfoy library as a wedding present then," Narcissa offered. "Lucius never uses the thing and it's just taking up space."

"You can have any of my husband's books," Bellatrix agreed. "I dubt he can read anymore."

"Oh thank you so much," Luna shouted. "How's your cake?"

"You're quite a talented cook," Bellatrix replied. "Would you like to join us for our weekly tea?"

"I'd love to," Luna agreed. "It'll be ever so much fun."

AN: I still need to think of a title for this, 1st runner up is 'Cake or Death?' Tell me what you all think.

Part II to Let's do the Time Warp Again

"James . . . wake up mate," Sirius shook his friend. "Are you alright?"

"Oh god what happened?" James looked around, "I had the worst dream."

"If it's that Harry learned THAT SPELL and used it on Wormtail then that was no dream." Sirius sighed, "on the plus side . . . it turned out that Peter was a death eater, healers found the mark when he went in because of . . . you know what."

"Oh," color began to return to James's cheeks. "So he's a death eater . . . Lily, he was going to hurt Lily and Harry protected her."

"Maybe," Sirius shrugged. "That's what Lily thinks, she's been going on about how her manly little boy protected his mummy . . . it's starting to scare me."

"Mate," James looked over to his best friend. "You're going to have to accept it some day . . . I did and my life is happier."

"That your wife is insane?" Sirius raised an eyebrow.

"Yes," James nodded. "But this ruins that unbreakable vow I made her swear to never use that spell on someone . . . it took months of planning to get her to promise that."

"And you were going to tell me this when?" Sirius's eyes flashed, "I've been living in fear for no reason."

"She told me not to say anything," James shrugged. "Threatened to make me sleep on the couch for a night if I told you."

"You let me live in fear for my life for months because you didn't want to sleep on the couch for one night?" Sirius was shocked that friendship seemed to mean so little.

"Yup," James nodded. "One, the couch is really uncomfortable. Two, well . . . I'm not going to tell you."



"You're not going to tell me?" Sirius's eyes narrowed.

"Sorry," James shrugged. "But there are some things that I'm not going to share about the joys I've found in married life."

"Oh," Sirius blinked. "Oh . . . so you . . . oh."

"Right," James nodded. "Now let's go get drunk."

"Sounds like a plan," Sirius nodded. "Or we could get blotto here and we won't run the risk of meeting a bunch of drag queens like last time."

"Poor Peter had to find out the hard way," James shook his head. "Ok, let's do it your way."

Three bottles of gin later . . . yes gin, they're Brits and Gin is a British alcohol, I added it for a bit of local flavor like those authors that . . . ah ta hell with it.

"I shink yer gonna havta fashe faks," Sirius slurred. "Yer shon's a derk lerd . . . no bloke 'll yush dat spill less he'sh a derk lerd . . . a reelly pwerfl derk lerd . . . voldsomething doeshent yuesh dat spell."

"I know," James nodded. "But he's still my son and I'm sure that if I raise him right he won't try to kill muggle born magic folk like every other dark lord in history . . . I don't think Lily would like it if he did that."

"A derk lerd thatsh hun hun killsh derk lerdsh?" Sirius perked up, "thash greet."

"Yeah," James nodded. "So can I have some gin now? I want to get blotto too."

"No," Sirius hugged the body. "Ish all mine I need it."

"Why?" James cast a quick sobriety charm on his friend, "What else happened while I was out?"

"Babies," Sirius shuddered. "Lots of babies."

"What?" James blinked.

"While you were out dozens of babies popped in with their parents . . . all of them girls,"

"Lily's been recruiting again?" James nodded, "I guess that makes sense."

"They came on their own," Sirius shuddered. "Some of the families were muggles . . . the kids used accidental magic to get in."

"Oh," James blinked.

"Some of them can talk and they told Lily that they're in Harry's Harem," Sirius shuddered. "She's happy but . . ."

IIIIIIII

"Not that I'm not glad to see you here Cissy," Lilly said with a smile. "But aren't you married? And . . . and didn't you have a son?"

"My husband died in a tragic accident," Narcissa explained. "And I always wanted a little girl so . . ."

"And I killed my husband and his brother," Bella added proudly. "In a tragic accident that I had nothing to do with," she added hastily upon seeing her sister's glare. "All so I could be with Harry and my widdle Orion."

"Orion?" Lilly asked.

"She's obsessed with getting that Longbottom boy to be the most ruthless dark lord in history . . . or to have him get an army of dark consorts to produce hundreds of grand children to play with."

"Well at least she has her head on right," Lilly said in approval. "I can't agree with the dark lord thing but hundreds of little grand babies is a goal any mother can get behind."

"Alice thinks so," Narcissa agreed. "And Frank just mopes around the house muttering about how why should his son get a harem if he can't, it's all quite pathetic."

"So is your new daughter going to be in my manly little man's harem?" Lilly asked with a happy grin.

"No," Narcissa replied. "I've already spoken to Molly and arranged a betrothal to her youngest son."

"How nice," Lilly clapped. "We'll all be one big happy family."

IIIIIIIIII

"Look," James began. "I understand your desire to get away from my house, I understand your desire to get blotto, and I understand the fact that you burst into tears whenever someone mentions THAT spell . . . to be Frank, I do to."

"Get to the point," Sirius ordered.

"Why the hell do we have to wear dresses?" James demanded, waving at his ankle length skirt.

"To make Harry think we're girls," Sirius explained. "That way he won't use THAT spell on us and we shall live out the rest of our days without losing something very important to us."

"Ok," James agreed. "I'll buy that, just . . . just why did you feel the need to wear Lilly's favorite black cocktail dress?"

"Is it wrong for me to want to feel pretty once and a while?" Sirius whined.

"Yes," James said firmly. "Now I'll never be able to enjoy seeing Lilly in that thing ever again . . . not to mention what she'll do to you when she finds out."

"I've got to hide," Sirius screamed. "Azkaban, I'll be safe in Azkaban. Don't move buddy, this will only hurt for a little while."

"I'm not letting you crucio me," James growled.

"Just for a bit?" Sirius whined.

"No"

"Come on mate," Sirius begged. "I gave you my kidney didn't I?"

"One," James said holding up a finger. "You didn't give it to me, you slipped it onto my plate when I wasn't looking."

"And two?"

"You know I hate the taste of kidney," James replied. "You were just being a bastard."

"Damn it mate"

"Where's Remus," James asked, changing the subject. "Shouldn't he be here too?"

"Acceptable loss mate," Sirius said. "I asked him to babysit Harry so Lilly could spend some time with the girls . . . he shall be missed and his sacrifice will never be forgotten."

"So you're saying you sacrificed Remus so we could get a few hours of freedom while dressed in drag?" James wanted things to be clear.

"You got it mate," Sirius agreed.

"To Remus," James said, raising his glass. "He won't be forgotten till we've drunk at least half the bottle."

IIIIIIII

"And this is a cow," Remus read from the big book of farm animals. "Do you know what sound a cow makes?"

"Not really," Harry replied. "I grew up in an area that had a shortage of cows."

"Uh . . . I think you're supposed to say moo?" Remus said uncertainly. "I'm not too sure though, I haven't spent too much time around kids your age."

"Why don't we just play poker or something," Harry suggested.

"Would that be appropriate for a kid your age?" Remus questioned. "The book says up to age three."

"You could be the cool uncle that doesn't play by the rules," Harry said.

"I would but then Sirius wouldn't have anything to do," Remus replied.

"Uh . . ." Harry wasn't sure how to say this, "I think Sirius wants to be the creepy uncle that no one talks about."

"Why do you say that?"

"He's out with my father, they're both dressed like women, and they're both getting drunk." Harry explained.

"How do you know that?" Remus demanded.

"They're doing it in the back yard," Harry replied. "You can see them through the window behind you."

"Really?" Remus glanced over his shoulder. "So you can . . . Harry I want you to know that they weren't always like this."

"They were better at hiding it?" Harry ventured.

"And much more creative," Remus agreed. "To be frank, I think the only reason they're dressed in womens clothing is a reference to the title."

"And the title of the last one," Harry agreed. "Guy who wrote this is a rat bastard."

"So what do you wannna do now?"

"I was thinking of hiding in the bushes so I could ambush Voldemort when he walked up the sidewalk," Harry replied. "My day's open after that though."

"Voldemort?" Remus screamed.

"Yup," Harry agreed. "Wanna help?"

"To hell with it," Remus said suddenly. "I'm fed up with being responsible, if Sirius won't be the rebel uncle then I will."

"Yeah," Harry cheered.

IIIIIIII

"Damn it Janet, I love." Voldemort stopped singing when he got close to the house and switched to something a bit more evil. "Evil, I'm evil, I'm really really really really really evil."

"Get ready for it," Harry whispered. "Explosivo Castrado."

"Aahhh," Voldemort screamed. "Ahhhhhhhhhhh," Voldemort screamed some more."

"And that's the end of that chapter," Harry announced.

"You sure we should end it here?" Remus looked around.

"Kill me," Voldemort begged.

"It's just a figure of speech," Harry explained. "And a reference to a particular episode of a certain show."

"Really?"

"Could one of you stop talking long enough to put me to death?" Voldemort asked. "Please."

"Not right now," Harry replied. "Now as I was saying, it was an episode that had the characters watching a pilot for another show. That pilot had a character that said, 'that's the end of that chapter' as a catch phrase."

"If you say so," Remus agreed. "What now."

"KILL ME," Voldemort demanded.

"Fine," Remus agreed. "Reducto."

"Well," Harry began. "We could report this, I hear that there's a rather large reward for the death or capture of Voldemort."

"I guess," Remus agreed.

"Great," Harry enthused. "My guess is that Moody or someone will show up a few minutes late and we can report it then without having to call the Ministry."

"Harry," Remus said. "Life doesn't work like . . ."

"Thank god I got here in time," Moody arrived just in time to interrupt Remus.

"No but lazy writers do," Harry retorted.

"Looks like you two had things well in hand," Moody said with a look at Voldemort's body.

"Me and Remus defeated him," Harry agreed. "So we should split the reward."

"I only killed him because he begged for death," Remus protested.

"Right then," Moody agreed. "I'll just clean this up and have your money deposited."

"Cool," Harry said.

"And that's the end of that chapter," Remus offered.

## Thief

Having to go to work early so I've been a bit drowsy of late and haven't written much, don't know where I'd use this. I do have a half formed idea about Harry becoming a thief and robbing all of Voldemort's followers. "Facing them head on is idiocy," Harry said with contempt. "I'll hit them where they'll feel it at minimal risk to my personal safety." Or something like that. Guess it could go with that idea.

I am working with two fannon ideas here, the first is that each pureblood family has a branch of magic that they're good at. The second goes with the first and it is that the Potter branch is wards (I've also seen defence but not often). Here's the bloody idea that wouldn't leave my head, tell me what you think. I also need to figure out when to put this, I am thinking of putting it during book five but I'm not sure. Sirius would still be alive which would be a plus but I'm not really sure what role I'd put him in, maybe hiding overseas? I'm also not sure what role to have Ron play, any ideas would be helpful.

"This is useless," Harry said as he threw the catalog onto the table. "Nothing here will help me survive another fight with Voldemort."

"Just keep looking Harry," Hermione encouraged. "We're bound to find something."

"We've been looking through these catalogs for ages," Harry retorted. "And we haven't found anything, it looks like none of the shops in Diagon alley can help us . . . I think we've hit another dead end."

"Bloody hell," Ron groaned. "What else is there?"

"Just keep looking," Hermione persisted.

"We've been looking for ages," Harry growled. "We've checked the Library, we've asked the Professors, and now we've gone through every owl order catalog from Diagon Alley. What's left?"

"I might know a place," Ron whispered. "You both know it, it's where the darkest of the dark wizards do their shopping."



"Honestly Ron," Hermione lectured. "Knockturn Alley is just a magical shopping area like Diagon alley. While it may be true that some of the items found in Knockturn Alley may be a bit . . . dodgy, the vast majority of them are not."

"You already visited it huh?" Harry asked.

"There's a very nice used bookstore at the far end," Hermione admitted. "With a few things that I haven't been able to find anywhere else."

"They've still got dark things for sale," Ron persisted. "My dad went on a raid that netted a whole trunk full of banned items."

"It doesn't matter," Harry interjected to kill the coming argument. "Even if they did have illegal stuff then they wouldn't be selling it openly and I don't know how to find the shops that'll sell it . . . unless one of you knows something I don't."

"No," Hermione admitted, slumping in her chair. "The very definition of a black market is that it is unregulated and difficult to find, they'd all get arrested if it was easy."

"So that putts us back at square one," Harry sighed. "I still don't understand why the Professors won't help us."

"What about Dumbledore?" Hermione asked, "surely he'd help."

"He told me to enjoy my childhood while I had the chance," Harry replied. "No help there."

"It's too bad that your mum wasn't from a pureblood family," Ron said. "Then we might have a few more options."

"Ron," Hermione screamed.

"Care to explain that mate?" Harry growled.

"I'm just saying that her family might have specialised in defence or something," Ron defended himself. "Something more useful than wards anyway."

"What do you mean Wards?" Harry demanded.

"Potter family's always been good at making wards," Ron explained. "Bill has a dozen books that were written by one of your great great grandfathers and he says that it's the best one on the market, even after all these years. I was just saying that if your mum had been a pure blood too then maybe her family would have been good at dueling or something."

"How does being part of a family make you better at something?" Hermione asked with a frown.

"It doesn't," Ron explained. "What makes you better is the fact that your family's been doing something for so long that you've got all the good information."

"Family techniques," Hermione said in understanding. "When you get something really good you don't share it with the rest of the world."

"I guess," Ron agreed.

"So what do some of the other families specialise in?" Harry asked slowly.

"Don't know mate," Ron said apologetically. "S'not the sort of thing you ask."

"Why not?" Hermione demanded.

"It's just not," Ron replied. "All I know is that the Potters are good at wards, don't know anything about any of the others."

"What about the Weasleys?" Harry asked.

"The Weasleys?" Ron said nervously, "why do you ask?"

"You know what my family does," Harry replied. "What about yours?"

"It's only fair Ron," Hermione agreed.

"Well," said a rapidly reddening Ron. "My family's good at fertility magic . . ."

"Oh . . . I guess that explains why you have so many siblings," Harry said with a smirk.

"I guess," Ron agreed. "It's not something I like to think about mate."

"So you're going to have a lot of children too?" Hermione asked with an odd look on her face.

"Probably," Ron agreed. "Dad only had four brothers so I might not have too many."

"Four?" Hermione asked weakly.

"Two sets of twins," Ron explained. "My grandmother drew the line after two sets of twins."

"Let me guess," Harry said with a smirk. "Twins are common too."

"And triplets," Ron added. "Usually doesn't go more than three at a time, it happens but it's not too common."

"Let's get things back on track," Hermione suggested. "I don't suppose that we'd be able to get the other pureblood families to let Harry use their resources."

"I doubt it," Ron replied. "It's not something you share outside your family . . . I . . . you could use the Weasley family spells if you like."

"Thanks Ron," Harry said warmly. "But I thought you said they could only be used by family members."

Ron's blush returned, "Mum's decided that you're part of the family." He explained, "and dad's gone along with it. They were planning to give you a copy of the spells when you get married, don't tell them I told you this."

"Thanks Ron," Harry replied. "That really means a lot to me. Unfortunately, I can't think of a way to defeat the dark lord with fertility charms."

"Neither can I mate," Ron agreed. "But I hoped that one of you might have thought of something I didn't."

"Purebloods," Hermione said disdainfully. "Locking up information that could be used to defeat Voldemort. When are people going to learn that information should be free? I'll bet that we'd be able to find a way to defeat Voldemort if we had access to all those family spells."

"You really think that?" Harry asked slowly.

"I do," Hermione agreed. "Information has a right to be free to all. The free exchange of ideas is the only thing that allows us to move forward."

"Hmmmmm," Harry stroked his chin. "I might . . . hmmm, I need to think about some things."

"Wanna go check out your family magic huh?" Ron asked, "I can understand that mate. You're about the age where you should start learning it anyway."

"Can I look through it?" Hermione asked hopefully.

"Talk to me about it later," Harry muttered. "I'm sure I'll need your help to understand a few things anyway."

Harry wandered out of the room in a daze and eventually found himself in front of the Headmaster's office.

"I don't suppose you could just let him know I'm here could you?" Harry asked the gargoyle with a weak grin. The gargoyle tilted its head for a second, then stepped aside to allow passage. "Thank you."

"Harry my boy," Dumbledore said as Harry entered the office. "What brings you here?"

"I just heard something from Ron that I wanted to speak with you about sir," Harry explained.

"I think I understand," Dumbledore said kindly. "And I think I have just the thing for you."

"You do?" Harry asked hopefully.

"I do," Dumbledore confirmed. The old man pulled a book out of his desk and presented it to Harry, "if you have any questions that the book can not answer then I'm sure Professor McGonagall would be happy to answer them."

"Uh," Harry's jaw dropped as he read the title of the book. "It wasn't . . . I . . . I'm sure that I'll need a book on useful charms for the bedroom in the future sir." Harry paused to collect his thoughts, "but that's not what I'm here about."

"Oh?" The old man asked with a twinkle, "then what do you need?"

"Ron mentioned that every pureblood family had a branch of magic they studied," Harry began. "And he said that the Potters were experts at constructing wards."

"And you would like to have your family books," Dumbledore said knowingly.

"I think they'd let me have a connection to my family," Harry explained. "I know it seems silly but I'd feel like more of a Potter if I learned the family trade . . . even if I never did anything else with it."

"I understand," Dumbledore said kindly. "And I shall have them retrieved from their present location and brought to you."

"Thank you sir," Harry said in relief. "May I ask where they are?"

"They are in Britain's most heavily warded house," Dumbledore replied with a twinkle. "In a heavily warded trunk, I'm afraid that I cannot tell you more without violating an oath I made to a friend."

"Constant vigilance," Harry muttered to himself.

"I can neither confirm nor deny," Dumbledore replied, his eyes twinkling like mad.

"I understand sir," Harry sighed. "Do you know how soon they'll get here?"

"If my friend is at home," Dumbledore began. "The trunk should be waiting for you when you get to your dorm room."

"Thank you sir," Harry said as he rose from his chair. "I won't take up anymore of your time."

"Feel free to visit at any time Harry," Dumbledore said with a smile. "My door is always open."

Harry walked stiffly out of the Headmaster's office and glared at the book he'd been given. On the one hand he'd gotten it from the Headmaster, on the other hand . . . well, it could be useful. After tucking the book into one of his pockets, Harry walked back to the Gryffindor tower and was pleasantly surprised to find a trunk waiting for him on his bed. On top of the trunk was a small pile of books and a note which Harry took a few moments to examine.

*Potter,*

*Your father entrusted this to me and I'm passing it on to you. I can't tell you what the pass word is but your father told me that if you grew up with Black that you'd know it. I have included a small selection of books that I've managed to acquire over the years, your father wouldn't take them but I hope you will. Remember, knowing how to undo something that you've created will help you become more effective.*

*-Moody*

*P.S. I'm going to want you to come by to add a few layers to my defences after you've mastered a few skills, I'm feeling a bit exposed.*

A slow smile formed on Harry's face as he read the first title, 'How to Get Through Wards and Other Skills the Ministry Doesn't Want You to Know.' It seemed that things were beginning to look up.

Harry spent the rest of that night and most of the next morning studying his family's techniques and the books that Moody had sent him.

"Harry?" Harry jumped at Hermione's call, "Ron said you were up all night."

"Yeah," Harry agreed sleepily. "I was, I got these books from Moody with the stuff from my family and I've been looking through it all night."

"You didn't get any sleep?" Hermione asked with a frown.

"I don't think so," Harry said with a yawn. "It was all so interesting."

"Why don't you show me what Moody sent you," Hermione suggested.

"Ok," Harry agreed. "It's this stuff here."

"Harry," Hermione said flatly. "What are you planning to do with this?"

"The information I need is locked up away from where I can use it," Harry replied dully. "And you said it yourself, information yearns to be free."

"Yes but I didn't think you'd do this," Hermione protested weakly.

"I've decided to stop being passive," Harry said firmly. "The next time I fight Voldemort, I won't be some unprepared kid. If I win then it'll be because of skill not luck, and if I loose . . . if I loose then at least I'll know I tried."

"Why don't you put all this away for now," Hermione changed the subject. "And get some rest . . . I'll bring up something for you to eat from the great hall."

"Thanks Hermione," Harry said with a grin. "Just wake me up in a few hours."

"I will Harry," Hermione agreed. "And then I think we're going to have to have a long talk about things with Ron."

"Ok," Harry said. He put his books back into the trunk and closed the lid, he was asleep before his head hit the pillow.

"How am I going to handle this," Hermione muttered to herself as she walked out of the room. "Bad enough when he's just lazy and doesn't want to study, how am I going to handle him when he's motivated to do something."

Hermione was deep in thought when she entered the great hall and took her place by Ron.

"Murgle H'mogle," Ron grunted.

"Don't talk with your mouth full," Hermione scolded absently. "And remind me to save something for Harry."

"What's going on?" Ron asked after swallowing his food.

"The three of us are going to have a long quiet talk after this," Hermione said primly. "Quiet in that I don't want you shouting no matter what happens."

"Same to you," Ron replied smugly. "You have to be calm too."

"Of course," Hermione said quickly. "We're all going to be completely calm and rational about this."

"Good"

"Good"

Hermione finished her meal quickly and then carefully wrapped a sandwich in her handkerchief for Harry. "Coming Ron?"

"You go ahead," Ron waved. "I'm not finished yet."

"If you keep eating like that you'll be as big as Hagrid by the time you're thirty," Hermione snipped.

"Ah, I'll be married finished with my Professional Quidditch career by then so it won't matter." Ron waved off her concerns.



"I . . . see," Hermione said with a frown. "I'll leave you to it then."

Hermione made her way back to the tower and found Harry waiting for her at the entrance. "I thought you were going to get some sleep?"

"Hermione," Harry said nervously. "I need to talk with you about something."

"What do you need Harry?" Hermione asked quickly.

"You know that spell book I got from . . . you know?" Harry said slowly.

"The one about breaking and entering?" Hermione said flatly.

"You agreed that it could be useful in the fight against Voldemort," Harry defended himself.

"Yes I know, I just don't . . . never mind, I'll explain it later." Hermione forced herself to get back to the subject. "Go on Harry."

"Well I was practicing around my bunk and I found something," Harry said. "It took me a few minutes but I was able to figure out that it was a hidden compartment."

"You need me to help you get it open?" Hermione asked with a smile.

"No," Harry replied. "I was able to get it open . . . I found something . . . odd in the compartment."

"What'd you find?" Hermione demanded. "Was it dangerous?"

"I found a magazine," Harry said reluctantly. "Called Naughty Witch Magazine."

"Ah," Hermione said knowingly. Damn those Dursleys for never teaching Harry about basic biological functions. "Harry, it's perfectly natural for wizards to enjoy looking at pictures of naked witches. It's ok if you looked at those pictures and there's nothing wrong with you." Hermione said gently, "I'd be happy to explain any funny feelings you may have felt and I'd also be willing to help you find

someone else to explain if hearing it from me would make you feel uncomfortable."

"Glad you think so," Harry's voice cracked. "But that's not what I wanted to talk to you about."

"Then what did you want to talk to me about?" Hermione asked sharply.

"Page twenty four," Harry said, handing over the magazine.

Hermione took the magazine and flipped to the indicated page, Hermione's eyes widened in shock and she turned to stare at Harry. "Is that?"

"Mrs. Weasley," Harry confirmed.

"Do you think Mr. Weasley knows?" Hermione said dumbly.

"I'd say so," Harry agreed. "Turn to the next page."

"My god," Hermione's voice cracked. "I didn't even know that position was possible."

"What are we going to do?" Harry asked. "We can't tell Ron and I don't know if I'll ever be able to look at Mrs. Weasley the same way again."

"Let's just pretend we never saw this," Hermione suggested after a moment of thought.

"I'm not sure I can do that," Harry said nervously. "You don't happen to know any memory charms do you?"

"None I'd cast on you," Hermione replied absently. "Hide it with your family magic and let's never ever tell Ron about this."

"Sounds like a plan," Harry agreed quickly.

"What do we do with this?" Hermione asked, holding up the magazine.

"I'm going to send it to Mr. Weasley by one of the school owls," Harry replied. "Maybe it was someone using Polyjuice and if it was then he deserves to know about it. If it wasn't then I don't want him to know who found it."

"Good plan," Hermione agreed quickly. "Let's get it out of the castle before Ron gets back."

The two friends rushed to the owlery and quickly found one of the less noticeable school owls. "Tie it on quick," Harry commanded. "I want to be back in the tower when Ron gets back."

"I'm going as fast as I can," Hermione whispered back. The girl's fingers blurred as she tied several knots, "there. Take this to Arthur Weasley." The both sighed in relief as they watched the owl disappear into the distance.

"Now let's get back to the tower," Harry suggested. "And pretend nothing ever happened."

"I'm already repressing the memory," Hermione agreed. The duo returned to Gryffindor tower to find their friend waiting for them.

"Hey guys," Ron greeted them. "I figured you'd be in the tower."

"Uh . . ." Hermione began, "we thought you'd still be at breakfast."

"I decided to hurry," Ron replied. "Figured it was important . . . whatever you wanted to talk about I mean."

"Oh . . ." Harry said nervously, "yes . . . let's get to it then."

"I think I know what you want to tell me," Ron said slyly. "Good on the two of you."

"Yes . . . well," Hermione stammered. "That's not important right now, the important thing is that we talk to you about something else."

"Ok," Ron agreed. "What do the two of you want to talk about?"

"Let's go up to your dorm," Hermione suggested. "We'll have a bit more privacy up there."

"Why did Ron just give me a knowing wink?" Harry whispered to Hermione as the trio walked up the stairs.

"He thinks we're dating," Hermione whispered back.

"He thinks what?" Harry whispered in shock.

"It's either that or find a better excuse for what we were doing," Hermione replied.

"So what did you two want to talk about then?" Ron asked once they'd reached the privacy of Harry's bed.

"One moment," Hermione replied. The boys watched as she put up several privacy charms. "Go on Harry."

"You know how we figured that most of the information we'd need to fight Voldemort is in private family collections?" Harry began nervously.

"Yeah mate," Ron agreed.

"Well . . . you know how Potters are supposed to be good at wards?" Harry said nervously.

"I know mate," Ron said with a nod. "I told you."

"Well, why don't I just use that to go in and take the knowledge we need?" Harry asked with a fake grin.

"Because it'd push them right into Voldemort's hands mate," Ron replied. "Or at least away from the light if they ever figured out who was robbing them. Serious stuff mate."

"How about we just go after Voldemort's supporters?" Hermione suggested, "no danger of making them go to the other side."

"Could work," Ron allowed. "And I'd love to see the look on Malfoy's face when he realised that his family secrets weren't so secret, count me in."

"Ok," Harry began enthusiastically. "I've got these books from Moody on cracking Wards, the best one seems to be the one with the red cover."

"Don't waste your time with that thing Harry," Hermione said with a look of distaste.

"I thought you were with us on this?" Ron said with a look of confusion.

Hermione sniffed. "I am, but that book was outdated decades ago," she said.

"Well, it isn't as if you have a better one, is it?" Ron glared.

Hermione ran from the room, returning with a slim volume.

"This is the Little Black Book of Ward Viruses," she said proudly. "It was written by some American students at MIT&T, and was inspired by the Little Black Book of Computer Viruses. A friend I met on the Internet during the holidays is going to send me a copy of 40Runes, too!"

Harry looked at it doubtfully.

Hermione pulled out a sheaf of photocopies. "AND I have a copy of the MIT&T Guide to Ward Picking, by Mel the Mage."

Ron was wide eyed. "'Mione..."

Harry poked the Little Black Book carefully, much the same way that one would treat a box containing a highly irritated feline. "How many years in Azkaban would these things get you?"

"None," Hermione said smugly. "Since it's obvious that the only reason Harry has them is to design better countermeasures."

"What?" Ron asked in shock.

"After your little lecture about family specialties, I did a little research." Hermione explained, "and it seems that the law allows warders and people studying to be warders to collect information on how to break wards so that countermeasures can be developed. I don't know why your father didn't want to take Moody's books, especially considering the trouble he got into when he was younger."

"I don't think he was planning to join the family business," Harry replied. "There's a note in the trunk that mentioned that he wanted to make a name for himself, not follow family tradition."

AN: Thanks to to Ed and AlanP, along with several others on my group for some of the things that are making their way into this story.

## Cool Hand Harry

Dumbledore leaned back in his chair, Hagrid was getting Harry and all was right in the world.

"Mind if I speak with you for a minute Ed'master?" Hagrid asked with a grin.

"Hagrid?" Dumbledore asked in shock, "but . . . weren't you supposed to be getting Harry?"

"Fluffy got sick," Hagrid explained. "So I ad' to sit wif her all night, poor thing."

"Then who's getting Harry?" Dumbledore asked with growing dread.

"Sent ma cousin Bubba to get 'im," Hagrid replied. "E's got lots of time since 'e got outta that American prison."

"Oh god." Dumbledore's head fell to his desk, it was going to be one of those years.

IIIIIIII

Meanwhile, in a small shack on a small island in the English Channel . . . or North Sea depending on your preferences.

"Get out you freak," Vernon screamed.

"Shut up," Bubba said with quiet menace. "You Harry Potter?"

"Yes sir," Harry agreed.

"Polite boy," Bubba said with approval. "Have a doughnut."

"Thank you sir." Harry reached into the box that the large man had pulled from nothing and selected a doughnut.

"I WANNA DOUGHNUT TOO," Dudley whined.

"Shut up," Bubba said calmly. "Harry, you wait here with your cousin while I go into the next room to . . . talk with your relatives."

"Yes sir," Harry agreed.

"And if the little pig gives you any lip, stab him with a sharpened tooth brush."

"Yes sir," Harry agreed again.

"Come on fatty." Bubba grabbed Vernon by the throat. "I've got some pent up urges to take care of."

"Oh god no." Vernon started crying.

"Oh god yes," Petunia said with a grin. "Can I come too?"

"Sure thing," Bubba said with a smile.

The adults were gone for several hours before the door to the next room opened up again to admit Bubba and Petunia. Behind the two adults, the boys could see a naked Vernon curled up and crying in the next room.

"Good news Harry," Bubba said with a smile. "I'm going to be your new uncle."

"Yes sir," Harry agreed again.

"Just call me Uncle Bubba from now on," Bubba suggested. "Now let's all go get your school supplies."

"Ok Uncle Bubba," Harry agreed.

"When will I see you again?" Petunia cried out.

"When I get done shopping," Bubba replied. "We'll hook up at your place and have a bit of fun."

"What about fatty?" Petunia asked with a wave towards Vernon.

"What about him," Bubba shrugged. "Come on kid."



"Ok uncle," Harry agreed. The two of them walked outside and Harry was surprised to see his new uncle wave a wand to create a bridge across the water. "How'd you do that?"

"Magic," Bubba replied. "Fatty didn't tell you about it then?"

"No," Harry said quickly.

"Well you're a wizard and you can do magic and the whole wizarding thing is real," Bubba said with a yawn. "Any questions?"

"No uncle," Harry replied.

"Good, now let's go."

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Dumbledore burst into the Dursley home, desperate to find Harry Potter before the boy had a chance to be corrupted by Hagrids crazy cousin. "No one here," Dumbledore mumbled to himself. "That means . . . I'm not too late, I've just got to wait until the family gets back from whatever they're doing and another crisis can be averted." It was a brilliant plan, too bad he late.

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"So where are we going?" Harry asked his new uncle.

"Guy I know," Bubba replied. "We'll be able to get everything you could ever need from him at much lower prices then you'd find in the alley."

"The alley?"

"Shouda said alleys," Bubba corrected himself. "Two of them cater to the wizarding society, they're overpriced and fulla morons. Much easier to know a guy."

"Right." Young Harry absorbed that bit of wisdom.

"May as well start you off learning magic too," Bubba mused. "Lot's of things you can do without a wand, most of them useful."

"Like what?" Harry asked.

"Well," Bubba began. "There's the usual stuff that most people think of and then there's the . . . well, I guess I'd say the kind that gets used when you don't have a wand."

"Ok," Harry said slowly.

"Don't understand do you?" Bubba asked with a smile. "Think of it this way, there are places in the world where they take your wand away. There are other places in the world where you can't use a wand. And finally, there are times when it's more convenient not to use a wand."

"I think I understand," Harry said slowly.

"Good boy." Bubba led the boy down a series of back streets to a nondescript door. "Open up," He called as he pounded on the door. "I haven't got all day."

"I'm coming," a voice on the other side replied. "Who is it?"

"Who do ya think?" Bubba replied with a smile.

"Bubba?" The voice said in delight as the door opened to reveal an old man. "Why . . . I haven't seen you in . . ."

"Close to ten years," Bubba said with a grin. "How are things going for your business?"

"Semi retired," the old man said with a shrug. "What do you need?"

"Everything the boy needs to go to Hogwarts," Bubba replied. "Plus whatever else you think might be useful."

"Got a set of twelve disposables sitting around," the old man mused. "Even Ollivander would have trouble telling them apart."

"Toss 'em in," Bubba agreed.

"What are disposables?" Harry asked.

"Wizards use wands to cast most magic," the old man explained. "The problem with that is that the wand records what spells have been cast. With these wands, you dispose of them after you use a spell that might get you into trouble."

"Oh . . . but why do they need to look the same?"

"So no one asks why you've got a new wand," Bubba said. "Got a few more tricks I can show you to deal with that."

"Wow," Harry said. His new uncle was better than his old one by an order of magnitude.

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Harry stood on the platform saying farewell to his favorite relative.

"Just remember what I taught ye," Bubba said.

"Yes Uncle Bubba."

"Before you go, one more thing I want to tell you."

"What is it?"

"Well Harry," Uncle Bubba began. "School is just like prison, find the toughest bastard there and kick his ass first chance you get. Hear me?"

"I will sir," Harry agreed.

"Take care of yourself."

Harry took the train to school and was sorted into the same house he always was. It took him three days to find a back way into the Slytherin common room . . .

"How'd you get in here?" The Slytherin boy asked with an amused grin, "and how do you plan to get out?"

"Draco thinks he's the top dog in this house," Harry said calmly. "Is that true?"

"To some extent," the boy agreed. "Why do you ask."

"Watch," Harry commanded.

"Potter?" Draco said in shock as he walked into his common room.

"Shut up," Harry said with a grin and kicked Draco in the groin. Harry spent the next fifteen minutes methodically beating Draco just badly enough to cause an immense amount of pain without leaving any incriminating marks. It was one thing he knew how to do after living with Vernon Dursley for the first several years of his life.

"Very good," the first Slytherin said with a grin. "Now what incentive do I have to keep my mouth shut?"

"You're going to say that Harry Potter, the golden Griff, broke into your common room and assaulted another student while you stood by and watched?" Harry asked with a grin.

"Well . . . after you put it like that."

"Have a nice day," Harry called over his shoulder as he left the room.

"One more thing," the boy called out. "Why aren't you in this house?"

"Cause I'm not bloody stupid enough to advertise what I am," Harry replied as he walked away.

"Damn," the boy growled. "Wish I'd thought of that."

Harry was wondering around the halls a few days later when he heard a commotion coming from one of the girl's bathrooms.

"What's going on?" Harry asked as he entered.

"Troll," Hermione screamed.

"Ah," Harry said as the troll turned towards him. "Don't worry, my uncle taught me what to do in situations like this."

Professors; Dumbledore, McGonagall, and Snape came upon an odd scene a few minutes later. A grinning Harry Potter and a catatonic Hermione Granger standing next to the body of a large troll.

"What's happened here?" McGonagall demanded.

"Don't know Professor," Harry replied innocently. His uncle had taught him just enough mental discipline to appear to be telling the truth.

"Is that really what happened Harry?" Dumbledore asked in his best grandfatherly voice.

"Yep." Harry agreed.

"Hmmm," Dumbledore said. Every bit of his formidable skill said that Harry was telling the truth.

"May we go now?"

"Yes you may go."

"Come on Hermione," Harry grabbed his newest friend by the arm and led her out of the room into his head of house. "Sorry about that Professor McGonagall, I wasn't looking where I was going."

"That's fine Mr. Potter," McGonagall replied. "Just be more careful in the future."

"Yes Professor," Harry said quickly. It wouldn't be until several hours later that Minerva would find the bloody sharpened toothbrush that had been slipped in her pocket.

AN: What did Uncle Bubba teach Harry? How to focus Magic into a toothbrush to sharpen it, using self transfiguration to make yourself look like someone else, how to get past guard dogs, making potions in a toilet or other nonstandard container with commonly available ingredients, how to make a wand by rolling up some paper. Who knows what else . . .

## Better living through Chemistry

It all started with a book. Harry walked stiffly towards his relatives' house, Dudley and his 'friends' had been a bit . . . rougher than usual and Harry was having to take frequent breaks.

Leaning against a garbage can to catch his breath, something caught his eye. "What's this?" Harry pulled out a book and read the title. "'Better Living Through Chemistry?'" Well, I suppose my life can't get any worse." Harry carefully tucked the book in one of the pockets of his massive hand-me-down jacket and continued home.

It would be several hours before he had a chance to examine his find, after he'd been tossed into his cupboard. For the next few hours, Harry used the thin sliver of light that intruded through the cracks to digest the contents of the book. And with one little book, the world changed.

The first ones to notice Harry's new hobby were his aunt and uncle.

"What's this then?" Vernon demanded as he lifted Harry's prized book out of reach.

"Book on chemistry," Harry said quickly.

"Who'd you steal it from?" Vernon growled.

"No one," Harry replied. "I found it in the trash."

"Likely story," Vernon grunted. "Get into the cupboard."

"Yes uncle," Harry said in defeat.

Petunia waited until the boy had left before offering a comment. "Vernon I think . . . I think we should let him keep his hobby."

"What, why?" Vernon growled.

"Isn't science the opposite of . . . of . . . freakishness?" Petunia whispered, as if the conversation might summon one of 'them.'

"I suppose," Vernon grudgingly agreed.

"We've tried beating it out of him," Petunia whispered. "And that didn't work. I can't think of anything else."

"Might keep the little bastard off the dole when he gets older too." Vernon mused, "Anything that keeps another leach away from my taxes is a good thing in my book."

"Exactly," Petunia agreed.

"BOY," Vernon yelled. "Get out here now."

"Yes uncle," Harry said hesitantly.

"We've decided to let you keep your book," Vernon said magnanimously. "So long as you do your chores and a few extra."

"Thank you uncle," Harry replied.

The years passed and Harry's skill grew by leaps and bounds. Every spare moment was spent in a makeshift laboratory the boy had cobbled together in a corner of the garden shed.

"Hey freak," Dudley yelled at his cousin.

"What is it Dudley?" Harry asked with a sigh.

"Why don't you look at me when I talk to you," Dudley growled.

"You tell him Duds," one of Dudley's toadies cheered.

"I'm too busy to play with you at the moment Dudley," Harry said absently. "Why don't you go play with yourself."

"I said look at me when I talk to you," the large boy took a menacing step forward.

"I don't think you want to get any closer Dudley," Harry's voice hardened. "In fact, I don't think I want you anywhere near my glass. Some of these items took me forever to find."

"You can't tell me what to do," Dudley said belligerently. "I think it's time I showed you who's boss again. Boys, break his toys." Dudley said to the small gang of hangers on that surrounded him.

"Remember." Harry reached into his pocket and pulled out what appeared to be a bottle of nasal spray. "I warned you."

"Wha?" Dudley felt a split second of confusion before the world dissolved into pain.

"What did you do to him?"

"Formaldehyde," Harry said with a yawn. "I think you might want to flush his eyes out with this." Harry tossed a small bottle to the other boy. "I also think you might want to tell him to leave me alone from now on."

"Wait till I tell my parents," Dudley gasped.

"Thought you were more of a man than that Dudders," Harry laughed. "Then again you did bring a few friends with you to deal with little ol' me." Harry's voice hardened, "listen very carefully. If you do anything that causes damage to my laboratory, I'll do something unpleasant to you. I don't care what else you do, I don't care if you act like your normal boorish self anywhere but here. If you threaten my lab in any way, well . . ." Harry waved his spray bottle in the blinded boy's direction. "I'll be forced to retaliate."

Things soon fell into a predictable pattern, Dudley and his followers would harass Harry without any fear of reprisal every place but one. Harry in turn spent so little time away from his sanctuary that he figured it a good deal and made not attempt to gain a higher position on the social ladder.

Things once again fell into a predictable routine until a certain letter arrived . . .

"Thanks." Harry snatched the mail out of the post man's hands and quickly sorted through it. "Junk, junk, junk, junk, a letter with my name on it?" Harry spared it a glance before tossing it on the pile of junk mail. "Ah, here it is." Harry held it up in triumph. "My industrial



chemical supply catalog. I've been waiting weeks for this to arrive." Sure he couldn't afford anything in it, but it still had a lot of information available to anyone that choose to read it carefully.

"What's this boy?" Vernon's voice stopped Harry before he could escape to his lab.

"What?" Harry turned to look. "Oh that? Just some garbage."

"Be on your way then." Vernon had to fight to keep the pleased smile off his face. Looked like his years of hard work had paid off.

Harry spent the rest of the day in his laboratory and woke up early the next day to finish an experiment he'd been working on. His uncle's bellow of anger caused him to look up a bit. But as the man was nowhere in sight, Harry concluded that the anger wasn't directed at him for once and turned back to his work.

The house was filled with letters when Harry woke up the next morning and his relatives found him standing in the sitting room looking at a the pile with an odd look on his face.

"Gather those up in a bag and put them on the curb," Vernon ordered.

"I'd rather not," Harry said absently.

"Why?" Vernon growled.

"I think I might be able to turn them into something useful," Harry said in the same absent tone. "And it'd be a shame to throw them out if that's true."

"Like what?"

"An artificial log maybe?" Harry mused. "Or fertilizer for the garden."

"Oh . . ." Vernon wasn't sure how to react to that.

"Maybe I could . . . but I'd need some way to pulp them first," Harry continued. "May I use your shredder uncle?"

Vernon was torn between his desire to see his nephew unhappy and his desire to see his nephew reject the freakishness. "You may," Vernon agreed. "But only after you wash the car, cook breakfast, mow the lawn, pull the weeds out of the garden, and clean the house." In the end, he couldn't decide between the two and decided to choose both. Who said you can't have your cake and eat it too?

"Yes uncle," Harry agreed.

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"Well?" The Headmaster asked.

"He's getting them," Minerva replied with a frown. "Charms say that he even read one, but we still haven't gotten any response."

"Perhaps I should go and find out what's wrong," Dumbledore suggested. "I can't imagine why we haven't gotten a response."

"He was raised as a muggle," Minerva pointed out.

"True," Albus agreed. "No matter, I'll straighten things out myself. No need to worry about it any longer."

"Yes Headmaster."

Dumbledore walked off school grounds and disappeared with a pop. He reappeared in front of the Dursley home and approached the door. Raising his hand, he knocked three times and fixed a smile on his face.

"You," Petunia said as she answered the door. "What do you want?"

"I'm just here to make sure that Harry gets this." Albus brandished the letter.

"He got it and doesn't want anything to do with you," Petunia spat. "Now go away."

"Why don't you let him tell me that," Albus said reasonably.

"Of course," Petunia said with a smirk. "He's in the garden shed behind the house."

"Thank you," Dumbledore said to the closing door. Whistling a happy tune, Dumbledore walked around the house and to the shed. "Is anyone in there?"

"Just a sec," a child's voice replied.

"Alright," Dumbledore agreed. He was pleased to not that Lilly's son hadn't seemed to pick up any of his Aunt's habits.

"What can I do for you?" A boy that could only be Harry asked.

"I've come to give you this," Albus said with a smile. "Your acceptance to Hogwarts."

"Does it have a chemistry department?" Harry asked bluntly.

"No."

"Physics?"

"I'm afraid not."

"Biology, mathematics, engineering, any of the sciences at all?" Harry demanded.

"It has magic," Dumbledore said with a smile.

"No thanks," Harry said with a poorly concealed frown. "I'd rather stay in compulsory education."

"But . . . don't you want to learn magic?" Albus asked in shock. In all his time as Headmaster, he couldn't recall a single instance like this.

"It might be interesting," Harry allowed. "But why would I want to do that if I had to give up science?"

"But . . ." Albus was flabbergasted. "We have potions," He offered weakly.

"Uh huh." Harry seemed less than impressed.

"And I could teach you alchemy," Albus said desperately.

"Or I could stay here and learn chemistry and other hard science," Harry countered. "Hmmm, I think I'll stay here."

"Why can't you study chemistry on your holidays?"

"Why couldn't I study magic?" Harry retorted.

"Because magic is so complex that . . ." Albus stopped when he noticed Harry's expanding grin. "I see."

"Unless I went to one of the intense study camps they have, I'd never keep up." Harry explained. "You can't expect me to give up my dream to learn a few tricks can you?"

"Tell me about these camps," Albus demanded.

"They take place at various places around the world," Harry began. "They're fairly intense, and they're also fairly expensive."

"What if I were to arrange for you to attend these camps?" Albus asked. "Then would you be willing to attend Hogwarts?"

"Maybe," Harry said slowly. "But only if I could have a place for my laboratory and time to use it."

"Agreed," Albus said quickly. "It's a deal then."

"With the understanding that I leave if it isn't kept," Harry said wearily. Years of living with the Dursleys had taught him to be suspicious of people's word.

"Of course," Albus replied. "Now if you're not too busy, why don't we go buy your school supplies."

"How long will it take?" Harry asked. "And for that matter, is there any reason I need to come back?"

"Shouldn't take too long," Albus said slowly. "But why wouldn't you want to come back? This is your home isn't it?"

"It's just a place I sleep," Harry said with a shrug. "Well?"

"I suppose you could take a room at the Leaky Cauldron," Albus replied. He did not like the the thoughts that Harry's statement dredged up.

"Good," Harry said with a smile. "Help me pack up my lab."

"Would shrinking hurt it?"

"Some of it maybe," Harry agreed. "And most of it is quite fragile."

"I'll be careful," Albus promised.

"Be especially careful with the chemicals," Harry said quickly. "Most of them can be quite dangerous."

"Where did you get them if they're dangerous?" Albus asked in confusion, he'd heard the the muggle world was even more restrictive then the magic.

"Something is dangerous and needs to be restricted if you call it Potassium Hydroxide or Sulfuric Acid, but it's perfectly safe if you call it drain cleaner." Harry explained. "You just have to get into the habit of reading labels."

"I see," Albus said thoughtfully.

"It's stupid," Harry continued. "The only difference is in people's heads. The government requires me to get a licence to buy things that I can get in a grocery store so long as they have a different name."

"Yes . . . well," Albus had no response.

"Ready," Harry said suddenly. "If you can use magic to pack all that, otherwise I'll need a bit more time."

"Easily done," Albus replied. Albus waved his wand and accomplished the task, privately he was a bit disappointed by the boy's lack of reaction.

"Ok, let's go."

"What about your things in the house?"

"Every thing I care about was in my lab," Harry replied. "That is now sitting in my pocket. Let's go."

"Wouldn't you like to say goodbye to your relatives?"

"No."

"Alright then," Albus said slowly. "Just touch this sock and we will be on our way."

"I'm gonna have to get some physics books," Harry muttered to himself. "A lot of physics books."

"What was that Mr. Potter?"

"What now?"

"Now we buy your wand and books," Dumbledore replied.

"I don't have any money," Harry said bluntly.

"On the contrary," Dumbledore said with a smile. "You have a whole vault full of it."

"Really?"

"Shall I show you?" Dumbledore asked.

"Sure," Harry agreed. Harry watched in intrest as the Headmaster led him to Gringotts and as the Goblins led them in and out of the vault. "Can I have my key?"

"Yes of course," Dumbledore agreed quickly. "Here you are."

"Thank you," Harry said as he pocketed the key.

"So," Dumbledore began. "Where do you want to go first? To get your wand perhaps?"

"Is there an alchemy supply store near here?" Harry asked with a yawn.

"I don't believe so," Dumbledore said slowly.

"What about a potions supply store?" Harry persisted. "A place where I can get some lab where anyway."

"That there is," Dumbledore replied.

"Let's go there," Harry suggested.

"If that is your wish young Potter," Dumbledore agreed. Dumbledore led Harry to a small shop and motioned the boy inside.

"Cauldrons?" Harry said in shock. "You people use Cauldrons?"

"Yes we do," the shopkeep said with a nod. "Muggle born?"

"Half blood, muggle raised." Dumbledore replied.

"What does that mean?" Harry demanded.

"Muggle is a term for a non magical person, your mother was from a non magic family and your father was a pure blood. Hence the term half blood." Dumbledore explained. "Muggle raised because you were raised by your non magical relatives."

"Any tangible advantage to being from a magical family?" Harry asked quickly. "I mean genetics not the fact that they are raised in a magical environment."

"No there is not," Dumbledore said quickly.

"I see . . ."

"Are you going to buy something or are you going to take up space all day?" The shopkeep said with a grin.

"Is there any difference in performance between the various types of metal used in the cauldrons?" Harry demanded.

"Some potions can only be brewed with some types of metal," the shopkeep explained. "And some metals last longer in some circumstances."

"Give me one of each of them," Harry said quickly. "I'd also like to get a look at your glass."

"Glass?"

"You don't use glass in potion making?" Harry asked in horror.

"Some," the shopkeep admitted. "But not many due to the heat involved. Mostly it's just used to hold completed potions."

"Let me see one of your containers," Harry sighed.

"Here." The man placed a small vial on the counter.

"Ah," Harry commented as he examined the vial. "Rather poor quality. I see why you don't use it much."

"You've got better?"

"Much better," Harry said quickly. "Headmaster, would you mind unshrinking some of my glass?"

"I'd be delighted to help Harry," Dumbledore agreed.

"This looks like a common bottle," the shopkeep examined one of Harry's most useful pieces of equipment.

"It is a bottle," Harry replied. "I didn't have much of a budget so most of my equipment is made up of stuff I've found and modified. You can still see the quality difference between that and what you had though."



"Could you get more of these?" The shopkeep asked as he looked in fascination at one of Harry's precious beakers.

"Yeah, why?"

"Because if you can then I'll pay handsomely for them," the shopkeep said. "Even more handsomely if you'll take store credit."

"Agreed," Harry said quickly. "Do you take custom orders?"

"What did you have in mind?"

"I'd like a small leather satchel that is larger on the inside than the outside," Harry began. "It'll need to be large enough to contain every bit of your best equipment and a full inventory of ingredients."

"Shouldn't be too hard," the shopkeep mused. "Leather merchant owes me a few favors. I presume that you want me to stock it for you?"

"With everything you have," Harry agreed.

"Might be a good idea to add a reference library too," the shopkeep suggested. "If you'll let me market this, I'd be willing to give you a percentage."

"I think it would be a good idea Harry," Dumbledore reentered the conversation.

"Alright sir," Harry agreed.

"How does ten percent sound?" The Shopkeep asked.

"That's fine," Harry said after a glance at Dumbledore's face.

"Good," the shopkeeper agreed. "This may not sound . . . well, let me restate that. I doubt sales will be as good if it's known that a first year Hogwarts student came up with the idea. Would you be willing to adopt an alias?"

"Sure," Harry agreed. "How about Newton?"

"First or last name?"

"Last name," Harry said. "H.P. Newton."

"Very good Mr?"

"Potter," Harry said.

"Harry Potter?"

"Yes."

"Might have been best to keep your name after all," the shopkeeper said with a laugh. "No matter, our invented man will do well enough."

"When will this all be ready?"

"Shouldn't be more than a day or two."

"Good." Harry paused to think about something. "Do you know where I could get a good lab coat?"

"Lab coat?"

"You know," Harry encouraged. "A white jacket that you wear to protect your clothing from spills?"

"I've never heard of such a thing," the shopkeeper admitted.

"Headmaster," Harry said. "Could you enlarge my catalogs?"

"Here you are Harry," the Headmaster handed Harry the lab supply catalogs.

"Just a sec." Harry flipped through the booklet for several seconds. "Here, this is a lab coat."

"I might have a few ideas for improvements," the shopkeeper said. "Mind if I talk with Madame Malkin before we go any further on this project?"

"Sure," Harry agreed with a shrug.

"Excellent, it looks like Mr. Newton may soon have another invention to his credit." The shopkeeper rubbed his hands together as he thought about his future profits. "Any other ideas?"

"Goggles, eyewash, uh . . . maybe you should just flip through the catalog."

"Thank you," the shopkeep said as he began flipping through the catalog. "Mr. Potter, I believe that it will be quite some time before we have to worry about a drop in profit potential if you can get me even half of these items."

"Good then."

"Will you be some place where I can reach you in the next few days?"

"Mr. Potter is intending to take rooms at the Leaky Cauldron," Dumbledore said quickly.

"How about I meet you there in a day or so," the shopkeeper suggested. "I'll have Tom tell you when."

"That's fine uh . . ."

"Never gave you my name did I?" The shopkeeper asked. "It's Fred Abel."

"Then I'll see you soon Mr. Abel," Harry said.

"Call me Fred Mr. Potter."

"Harry."

"Harry it is then."

"Goodbye Fred," Harry called out over his shoulder as he left the store.

"Where to now Harry?" Dumbledore asked. "Would you like to get your wand now?"

"I'd like to get some books," Harry replied.

"Flourish & Blotts is right over there," Dumbledore sighed.

"Let's go then," Harry demanded.

"As you wish." Dumbledore followed Harry into the store and quickly steered the boy towards the sets of first year texts. "I believe this is what's required for your first year."

"Good," Harry said. "You get a set of those and I'll get a few others to read before school starts." Before Dumbledore could make his reply, Harry disappeared into the stacks.

"This isn't quite how I expected things to go," Dumbledore sighed.

Harry quickly found the store's pitiful section on alchemy and was happily flipping through one of the books when a young girl approached him.

"Hello," the girl said. "Are you starting your first year too?"

"Yeah," Harry said absently.

"That's wonderful," the girl said. "My name is Hermione Granger and I'm the first witch in my family, are you the first magical person in your family?"

"No," Harry said without taking his eyes off the book. "But I wasn't raised around magic."

"Do you think we'll have a hard time fitting in?" Hermione asked with a worried frown. "I've been worried that I won't fit in so I've been studying everything I could. I came here today to get more books, my parents said I could get a few and I was just trying to figure out what to get. Do you have any ideas?"

"This one seems rather good." Harry held up the book so she could read the title.

"Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakarīya al-Rāzi?" Hermione read the author's name aloud.

"Many think he's the one that discovered Sulfuric Acid and the process to distill ethanol," Harry added.

"Oh," Hermione examined the book with greater interest. "Are there two of them?"

"Here." Harry handed the girl another copy.

"Thanks, I . . ." Hermione stopped when she noticed an older woman waving at her. "My mother's calling me, I have to go now."

"Fine," Harry said as he turned back to his book.

Eventually, Dumbledore managed to pull Harry away from his books to continue the shopping trip. Much to the old man's dismay, Harry insisted on getting every other item before they finally drifted into the wand shop.

After a rather . . . eventful wand selection, Harry was fed the largest meal he'd ever eaten and bundled off to bed in one of Tom's best rooms.

Fred the shopkeeper was waiting when Harry walked down to breakfast the next morning.

"Morning Fred," Harry yawned.

"Ah Harry," Fred began. "I have something to show you."

"What is it?"

"The prototype of the new lab coat," Fred said. "Madame Malkin was so intrigued by the idea that she worked through the night to make a prototype."

"Oh?"

"I've asked Tom for a private booth so we can discuss it," Fred continued. "Make your order and join me there will you?"

"Sure," Harry agreed. Harry quickly made his order and rejoined his new business partner.

"Take a look at this." Fred laid what appeared to be a standard lab coat on the table. "We took a muggle idea and used magic to make it as good as possible. It's as resistant to damage as we can make it, it has several self repairing charms, and the pockets are much deeper than they appear to be."

"My goggles?"

"They can see heat and cold, have a bubble headed charm, etc." Fred said with a yawn.

"Great, thanks."

"No problem," Fred said with a wave. "Most of the things went in here to prove that they could work together. Our production models will be much less extensive."

"Ok," Harry agreed. "Is everything else ready?"

"It'll be a few more days," Fred replied. "I'll have everything delivered to you at Hogwarts if there are any delays."

"Great."

Tom led Harry through the floo to the Platform personally on the first day of school. The old man had said that it was the least he could do for 'the-boy-who-lived' and Harry found himself a seat on the train.

Harry had pulled out a new texts and was just starting to understand a concept that had eluded on a previous reading when the door to the compartment opened.

"Uh . . ." Ron took one look at the boy with his nose in a book. "I'll find somewhere else to sit." Harry didn't even bother grunting in reply.

The next distraction came with the bushy headed girl he'd met in the bookstore. "Hello again," Hermione said. "It's nice to see someone I know on the train. You haven't seen a toad have you? Because a boy named Neville is looking for his pet toad that got loose and is now hopping around the train and I agreed to help him look for it. What book are you reading?"

"A brief history of time," Harry replied. "And no, I haven't seen a toad."

"Ok," Hermione said. "I'll keep looking then. See you later."

"Later."

Harry rode the train the remainder of the way to Hogwarts and allowed himself to be dragged along with the group to the sorting, his nose still buried firmly in the book.

"Potter, Harry." McGonagall called out and the hall went silent. "Potter, Harry . . . POTTER, HARRY."

"Hmmm?" Harry looked up from his book, "what do you need."

"Go sit on the chair and put on the hat," McGonagall ordered.

"Alright," Harry agreed. The hat was on his head for less than a second when Harry returned to his book.

"Hmmm," the hat pondered. "No ambition, never had friends and don't really understand the concept of loyalty, putting you in another house has been done to death and it would ruin a scene or two, so it had better be . . . GRYFFINDOR." The hall erupted into cheers . . . which trailed off after the students noticed that Harry hadn't made a move to get out of the chair.

"Take your seat Mr. Potter," McGonagall said calmly. "Take your seat Mr. Potter," she said a bit louder. "TAKE YOUR SEAT MR. POTTER," she yelled.

"Where?" Harry looked up with a bewildered expression.

"In that table over there." McGonagall indicated her house's table. "Got the looks from James," McGonagall muttered. "But I'll be damned if that isn't Lilly's boy."

Harry's first week of school was rather eventful, first came his Transfiguration class . . .

"What are you doing Mr. Potter?" McGonagall sighed.

"Checking the weight of the matchstick," Harry mumbled. "And comparing it to the needle you transfigured. Hmmm . . . weight is the same, I wonder if it's just gotten denser? Professor, could you transfigure another matchstick but stop half way this time?"

"Why don't you do it yourself?" McGonagall asked quickly, "that way you could have several at all stages if you gain enough skill."

"Right," Harry agreed. McGonagall watched in shock as the young boy transfigured several matches into needles. "Having trouble getting it to stay in the half done state," Harry said with a frown. "Could you offer a hint Professor."

"Five points to . . . " McGonagall started say before she caught herself. "Just . . . stop half way through."

"Uh . . . ok?"

Potions class also proved to be eventful . . .

Daphne growled, she had woken up late and by the time she got to her first Potions class everyone had paired up except one of the Gryffs. Why oh why was she being punished so?

"Move over," she growled at her new partner.

"Hmm?" Harry glanced over at her, "who are you?"

"Daphne Greengrass," she said with a smirk waiting for the stupid boy to recoil in horror . . . any moment now.

"Oh," Harry said with a blink. "Have a seat." With that the boy went back to his book, leaving his new partner in a state of confusion.

Snape entered and gave his speech a few minutes later before asking Harry a series of questions which the boy was able to answer easily. His plot foiled, Snape wrote a recipe on the board and stalked over to his desk to sulk.



"I wouldn't do that if I were you," Harry said to his new partner.

"Why now?" Daphne challenged.

"Because if you add that now it will explode and shower us with burning liquid," Harry replied. "Something I doubt you'd like to experience."

"Oh," the girl said in a small voice.

"Here." Harry spent a few moments arranging the girl's ingredients. "I've put them in order, first pile goes in first and so on. Feel free to ask if you need any more help."

"Ok." Daphne spent the rest of the class period brewing her potion and shooting curious glances at the boy sitting next to her.

In the days after the first potions class, Daphne began spending quite a bit of time around Harry. This of course confused the boy terribly but he eventually broke down and showed her the small laboratory that the Headmaster had allowed him to set up in one of the abandoned classrooms.

"Time to eat Harry," Daphne said.

"In a minute," Harry said absently.

"You said that ten minutes ago," Daphne whined. "It's time to go now."

"Alright," Harry sighed. He'd learned that there was only so far he could go before things started getting unpleasant. "Let's go."

The two children were walking down the hall to the great hall when Daphne froze. "Harry, be very quiet and don't make any sudden moves."

"Why?"

"Because there is a large Troll in the hallway ahead of us," Daphne replied. "Slowly, very slowly. Let's just slide into this room and hope he goes away."

"But that's the girl's toilet," Harry protested.

"It'll be ok to go in this once," Daphne hissed. "Now come on."

"Fine," Harry agreed with a sigh. The two children went into the bathroom and quickly discovered that they weren't alone.

"Granger?" Daphne said in shock. "What are you doing here?"

"Why are you crying?" Harry asked.

"Because I don't have any friends," Hermione sobbed. "No one likes me. They say I'm just a know it all."

"We'll be your friends," Harry offered.

Daphne frowned for a moment upon hearing Harry's pronouncement. Friends with a mudblood? Although . . . she did have the highest grades in the year and was second only to Harry when it came to potions. "That's right," she agreed. "We will."

"Thank you," Hermione said great fully. "I . . ." Anything more the girl might have said cut off when the door burst open to reveal an angry troll.

"That's right the troll," Harry said with a nod. "Forgot about that."

"You forgot about the Troll?" Daphne screamed in exasperation.

"Didn't seem important," Harry replied with a shrug.

"Not important? Bloody thing's gonna kill us and you don't think it's important?"

Harry reached into his pocket and pulled out a bottle of nasal spray and gave the Troll a squirt to the face when it got too close. The girls watched in shock as the troll began bellowing in pain and clutching it's eyes. "No," Harry agreed. "I don't think it's important."

"What did you do to it?" Hermione forced herself to ask.

"Formaldehyde," Harry explained. "Easy to get and it's more painful than capsaicin when you get it in the eyes."

"Isn't that what they use on dead people?" Hermione asked.

"Yep," Harry agreed.

Daphne watched in shock as the other two students held a normal conversation only a few feet away from a screaming troll. "What have I gotten myself into?" The girl muttered to herself.

|||||||

"Do you know why I've called you here Patrick?" Professor Snape asked.

"Not a clue Severus," Patrick Greengrass replied. "Does it have something to do with my daughter?"

"I'm afraid it does," Snape sighed. "Your daughter . . . Daphne has been spending a lot of time around Potter. So much time in fact that her classmates are beginning to wonder about her."

"Ah, is that all?" Patrick said with a laugh. "I'm well aware of that, in fact I've encouraged her to continue her friendship with the Potter boy and the muggle girl."

"You have?" Snape asked in shock. "Why?"

"You're asking me why I'm encouraging my daughter to pursue young Potter?" Patrick asked with an amused grin. "Let me put it another way. You're asking why I'm encouraging my daughter to go after a young wizard that has a large family fortune, fame, and the potential to be one of the greatest potions masters of our time?"

|||||||

The months passed and eventually the three students went into the bowels of the school to prevent the theft of the Philosopher's stone.

"We're going to have to get on a broom and pick out the right key," Hermione said in realization. "Uh . . . are either of you good enough to get it?"

"I might be," Daphne said with a frown. "But it'll take me a while . . . what are you doing Harry?"

"Mixing up some thermite," Harry replied absently.

"What's thermite?" Hermione asked.

"You might say it's a key to every lock," Harry replied. "Cover your eyes." The girls had known Harry long enough not to question him about things like this and both slapped their hands over their eyes immediately. "Ok, you can open them now."

"Uh . . . how did you burn a hole through the door?" Daphne asked in shock.

"I told you," Harry said. "Thermite, mixed with a bit of magic so it ignores gravity and there you are."

"Oh . . . let's go then." The three students walked through the door to find McGonagall's guardians.

"I think we're suppose to play through," Daphne said. "Harry . . . what's that bottle in your hand?"

"Nitro Glycerin," Harry replied. "You two might want to go back into the other room for a moment."

"Nitro . . ." Hermione's eyes widened in shock and she immediately grabbed Daphne by the arm and forced her into the other room. They were joined a few moments later by Harry.

"What did you just . . ." Daphne was interrupted by a giant explosion and a cloud of dust coming through the open doorway. "Never mind."

And finally, the trio came to the last challenge before the chamber with the stone. "One of us is going to have to stay here, one of us can

go forward, and one of us will have to go back for help." Hermione said. "Just give me a moment to work out this riddle."

"We could do that," Harry agreed. The girls watched as he pulled out a fire extinguisher and hosed down the flames. "Or we could all go ahead."

"Why did you have a fire extinguisher with you?" Hermione demanded.

"You'd be surprised at how often I need to use it," Harry replied with a shrug.

"Actually," Hermione said. "No I wouldn't."

"Let's just go," Daphne said in exasperation.

"Ok," Harry agreed.

After a short conversation with their Defence Professor, Harry and the gang were confronted by the spectre of the most feared dark lord in recent memory.

"You see Potter," Voldemort said. "There is not good or evil, only power and . . . are you listening to me?"

"Sorry about that," Harry said as he pulled something out of his pocket. "I just needed to find this." With that, Harry shot a long stream of liquid into the dark lord's face.

"Arrrg," Voldemort screamed. "What have you done to me."

"Formaldehyde," the girls replied together.

AN: This would be a very research heavy project if I ever get around to writing more of this. It would also need to be expanded quite a bit from it's present form. Anyone who wants to take this is welcome to it. Wrote a lot here for just an idea but I wanted to get to the end of the first year. If you don't like the fact that I put in Daphne Greengrass then you need look no further then Kinsfire in search of the culprit. It's his fault, I had no plans to put her in until I read a story of his on his

site which is Kinsfire dot net and I had to put her in. You see, I'm not at fault he is. Well what happens next, I don't know. Maybe something else with Snape, Harry thinks Snape is incompetent and Snape thinks Harry is a Potter. Year two, the giant snake gets a face full of Formaldehyde or maybe Harry tosses some elemental potassium in its mouth. Year three, formaldehyde doesn't work on dementors but it does on werewolves. Year four, who knows. Year five, toad woman gets a face full of . . . you guessed it formaldehyde. Year six, uh . . . something to do with formaldehyde. Year seven, Harry beats Voldemort with science. Now, some of you may have noticed that I used the word formaldehyde a lot in the last paragraph. This is because a: formaldehyde is a fun word, just say it a few times and see if it doesn't bring a smile to your face. And b: I didn't feel like doing much thinking and using formaldehyde when nothing popped into my brain was easy.

OMAKE: From the Grave.

Harry was sitting in his room staring dully at the wall when a strange owl swooped in and delivered a letter. Harry's throat developed a large lump when he read the front and realised that it was from his newly expired godfather.

*Dear Harry,*

*If you are reading this then I am dead, probably in the Department of Mysteries. At a guess I was killed some time between three and five in the afternoon by my cousin Bellatrix (You know, Draco's aunt, one of the people that tortured your friend's parents into insanity?) As I was saying, I'd guess that I wasn't paying attention and she hit me with some sort of spell, I don't think she'd have used a lethal spell which is strange because she doesn't normally show restraint but I digress. After being hit by this spell, I'll bet I fell down a staircase or into some sort of veil that kills people and now I'm dead. Harry, I just want to tell you that it's not your fault. I had a feeling that you'd be blaming yourself for my death, which may have happened because the Voldemort tricked you somewhere and I had to come to the rescue, if that's what happened then it's not your fault and you need to quit moping. Now if you're anything like James then you're entertaining thoughts of escape, and I want to be serious and not*

*Sirius for a minute. You can't escape, I know how easy it would be to wait till Dung took his shift at noon today (in fifteen minutes from the time you're reading this part) I know that all you have to do is wait till he gets drunk and passes out, (five minutes after his shift starts) which you'll confirm by listening for snores. I know that you realise that you can remove the underage detection charms on your wand by waving it three times, ending with a flick, and saying the incantation 'Whatever, I do magic when I want, screw you hippie.' And that you could then remove the tracking charms that were placed on virtually everything you own by saying, Badus Latatinus Spellus endus. I know that you're too smart to do this and that instead you'd choose to transfer them to something else such as your bed using the incantation, 'transfurus orus somethingus.' I realise that you would then walk down the street to the third house on the left, the yellow one with red flowers in the front where you would lift up a brick in the garden (the one with a five scratched into it) to find a small key that happens to be a portkey to a secret location. And I'm sure that you don't expect to find an unplotable location where you'll join me, realising that I faked my own death and then sent this letter. I know all this because you're too bright to try to leave the cess pool of a prison that Dumbledore has exiled you to.*

*Your 'Very dead, don't think otherwise' Godfather*

*Sirius (Faked my Death) Black.*

Harry blinked, once, twice, three times. Then he got to packing, he had a portkey to not get and a godfather to not get reunited with.

AN: Lots of fics have Harry getting a letter from Sirius after he gets home in the summer, many of these letters are surprisingly detailed. Suppose I could use this in a fic, have it be the start of one where Harry and Sirius have a summer of drunken debauchery. Also suppose that I've got a lot on my plate right not.

Another little Omake that popped into my head, goes with the above.

"Harry . . . Ron is your friend right? I mean, you two would do anything for each other right?"

"Yeah why?" Harry asked suspiciously, "does this have anything to do with my new liver?"

"No, of course not." Sirius said nervously, "I'm just making conversation."

"Oh . . . ok Sirius."

Back in England, Ron was waking up feeling very cold.

"Hwa?" Ron looked around, he seemed to be in a bath tub filled with ice. "What happened to me?" The boy's head swiveled around until he saw a message written on the mirror with lipstick.

*GO TO A HEALER NOW !*

Like I said, I've got too much on my plate to write 'Harry Potter and the Summer of Drunken Debauchery' so if anyone wants it . . .



Special Inspector Harry Potter AKA Dirty Harry

"Quite an interesting trial was it not Mr. Potter?" Madame Bones asked with a grin.

"Yes it was," Harry agreed. "I never thought I could get into so much trouble by trying to save my life."

"About that," Bones said. "I may have a proposition for you."

"What is it?" Harry asked.

"I want you to come work for me," Bones said simply.

"Me," Harry sighed. "So what? Do I become an Auror or something?"

"It takes three years to become an Auror and I need you now," Bones frowned. "Not after you get through school and Auror training . . . are you willing to try something different?"

"What?" Harry's eyes narrowed.

"I have a few strings I can pull," Bones replied. "And the standards to become a hit wizard are much lower then those to become an Auror."

"Where would I get my training?" Harry leaned forward, "I'm still in school."

"More strings," Bones smiled. "I have some friends overseas that would be willing to give you some off the books training."

"It would make sense to hide the fact that I received some training," Harry mused.

"It would if you were anyone but Harry Potter," Bones corrected. "The public expects you to be good, on the other hand it allows me to keep you from being trained by any of my people."

"Why do you want that?"

"I want you to come back and clean up my department." Bones gave a cool smile. "You'll get a few quick months of training and then come

back and root out any death eaters working for me, then we'll start on the rest of the ministry."

"And after that we'll disinfect the country," Harry took a deep breath. "Ok, I'm in . . . what do we do now?"

"Now you take this portkey." Bones gave Harry a worn coin. "Later, we'll talk."

"See you soon."

"Goodbye Mr. Potter," Amelia said as Harry disappeared.

"HARRY NO," Dumbledore yelled as he burst into the room. "Amelia . . . what have you done?"

IIIIIIII

Harry appeared knee deep in water. As he tried to move, the mud refused to release its hold on his shoes. "Damn it."

"Indeed," a familiar voice hissed. "It seems that Amelia has come through on her end of the bargain."

"Voldemort?" Harry yelled in shock. "Reducto."

"You're going to have to do better than that Potter," the voice laughed. "CRUCIO."

Harry dodged the spell and submerged himself. Knew I should have learned to breath underwater when I had the chance. Harry lamented. Ah well, no use for it now. Harry hugged the bottom as he made his way to the shore.

"Where are you Potter?" Voldemort's voice screamed. "You can't run from me." Harry crawled up the beach and carefully made his way into the brush. "You can't escape Potter," Voldemort laughed. "I know where you are. Why don't you make things easy for yourself, if you give up now then I promise to make things quick . . . well, quicker than I'd planned anyway." It took Harry nearly two hours to get close enough to be sure of getting a hit.

"Reducto," the boy whispered. The boy watched in shock as the spell connected. "Reducto, reducto, reducto." He chanted. Harry bit his lip to keep himself from screaming in joy. "Looks like you weren't so tough after all Tom," Harry taunted. "Now for that traitor Bones."

"Petrificus totalus." Harry whirled to confront the next attacker and was met by a spell to the chest. "I can work with you," the stranger said. "Made a few mistakes but that's not a big deal. You were quiet, you shot him in the back, you kept shooting, and you didn't give up. Must say that I was especially impressed with the fact that you were planning to give Bones a bit of payback. So tell me kid, what did you do wrong?" Harry just glared up at his captor and tried to growl. "That's right, poor situational awareness. You let me creep up on you and you let yourself celebrate after you thought you had the kill. Get up kid . . . no? Well, when the spell wears off meet me in the building two hundred meters north of here. Think about ways you can improve in the mean time. Later kid."

Harry just growled. You just made my list, Harry thought to himself. You, Bones, and Voldemort.

IIIIIIII

After a rather . . . spirited conversation with the Headmaster, Amelia returned to her office to continue the day's events. Stepping through the door, she was more than a bit surprised to find a disheveled figure sitting in her chair with his feet propped up on her desk.

"May I help you?" She asked with her best fake smile.

"Petrificus totalus," the figure replied. "You hired me to clean out your department," Harry said to the immobile woman. "I might as well start at the top." Harry forced the woman's jaws open and pored a small measure of truth potion down her throat. "Are you now or have you ever been a death eater?"

"No," Bones replied dully.

"Good enough for me," Harry said as he administered the counter agent.

"H . . . how?"

"Did I manage to get back so fast?" Harry asked. "The Canadians convinced the American government that this was important and that time was a factor. I can't say more than that."

"I understand." Amelia coughed. "Suppose I should swear you in then?"

"Always good to keep things official," Harry agreed. "Swear me in as a Special Inspector attached to your office. It'll give me a bit more freedom."

"But . . . right," Hold up your right hand. "Do you swear to clean up my department and not become a dark lord unless you resign first?"

"Uh . . . yeah, I guess."

"Good." Bones opened her desk and began throwing things. "Badge, equipment, etc. Get to work."

"I want at least two Aurors assigned to me," Harry said. "They'll make things easier anyway."

"Who do you want?"

"Shackelbolt and Tonks," Harry answered immediately. "Dose them and get them to my office."

"Office?"

"Interrogation room, whatever you want to call it." Harry said with a wave.

"Two doors down on the right," Bones agreed. "It's not very large."

"Fine," Harry agreed. Harry went to his new windowless office and spent the next few minutes cleaning it and transfiguring himself a desk.

"Uh, sir?" A voice called through his door.

"What is it?" Harry barked.

"Madame Bones ordered me to bring these two to you," the voice replied.

"Bout time," Harry growled. Harry opened the door and barely managed to conceal his surprise at the sight of his two drugged out friends. "Tonks, Shack are either of you or have either of you ever been death eaters?"

"No," the two Aurors droned.

"Are you planning to become death eaters?"

"No."

"Give them the antidote and have them come back here," Harry told the random ministry flunky.

"Yes sir," the flunky replied the the rapidly closing door.

IIIIIIIIII

"What's the big idea giving us Verataserum?" Tonks yelled as she barged into Harry's office.

"Stebbins," Harry ignored the angry Auror. "I need you two to bring him to me."

"You haven't answered my question . . . Harry?" Tonks said in shock as she finally recognised her friend. "What are you doing here?"

"We can talk about that later," Harry said coldly. "Right now I need you to bring Stebbins."

"Yes sir," Shacklebolt agreed. "Come on Tonks."

"But . . ."

"Save it for later," Kingsley said quickly. It took a few minutes for the Aurors to bring back their colleague.

"Good afternoon . . . Stebbins," Harry didn't smile at the large man.  
"Have a seat."

"What's this all about then?" The old auror looked around nervously.

"Drink what's in the glass," Harry didn't bother to look up from his notes.

"I have my rights," Stebbins protested.

"If you don't drink it you will be fired and detained for questioning," Harry looked up. "If you do drink it you will be out of here in two minutes."

"Alright then," Stebbins downed the liquid.

"Are you a death eater?" Harry leaned forward.

"Yes," Stebbins nodded.

"Good, that's all I need . . . give him the counter agent."

"But why not ask him questions about death eater plans or other identities?" Tonks protested.

"That's not my job," Harry yawned. "Just give him the counter agent."

"Fine," Tonks pried open the man's mouth and gave him another potion. "But I still think."

Stebbins blinked a couple times before he realised that he still had his wand. Drawing it slowly, he focused on the Potter kid . . . the dark lord would grant him a great reward for the boy's death. "Die Mud blood," Stebbins brought his wand up.

"Harry," Tonks screamed as she frantically grabbed for her wand fearing that she would be too late.

In a flash, Harry's wand appeared in his hand. The first cutting curse took Stebbins across his wand hand, destroying the man's wand and removing several fingers. Harry's second curse took the man across the face, destroying one eye and half the man's nose.

"He's had enough lad," Shacklebolt sprang forward. "Harry stop, if you do anymore you'll become a murder."

"I suppose," Harry pocked his wand. "Bring in the next one." The afternoon quickly became routine, Harry would question a person. If they were innocent, they would be released. But if they were a death eater, they frequently ended up going to the morgue.

|||||

"Arthur, I need you to come with me."

Arthur looked up from his papers. "Andy? What can I do for you?"

"I need you to come with me Arthur," Andy replied. "Dirty Harry wants to talk to you."

"Dirty Harry?"

"The Director's Bloody Hand," Andy said. "Her personal assassin."

"What would someone like that want with me?" Arthur asked in horror.

"Arthur," Andy ignored his friend's question. "We've been friends how long?"

"Nearly thirty years," Arthur replied. "Andy?"

"Arthur, I don't think you're a death eater." Andy began. "But if you are, don't pull your wand."

"Wha?"

"Just don't pull your wand," Andy repeated. "It's what he wants."

"Andy I don't understand."

"Just don't pull your wand," Andy whispered one last time. "See you soon Arthur." Arthur looked up to find that his friend had led him to a nondescript with several Aurors milling around in front of it.

"You're next Arthur," Kingsley said dully.

"Kingsley?" Arthur asked in shock, "what happened to you?"

"I've seen more death in two hours then I have in my entire career," Kingsley replied. "You can go in now."

Arthur nervously made his way through the crowd and through the door. "Harry?"

"Hey Mr. Weasley," Harry said cheerfully. "How is everyone?"

"They're doing good Harry," Arthur replied. "Do you know why we've been called here?"

"Just take a sip from the glass and I'll ask you one question," Harry ignored the older man's question. "If the answer is no then you're free to go and maybe we can talk later."

"Fine Harry," Arthur agreed. Arthur took a sip and felt his mind turn to mush.

"Are you now or have you ever been a death eater," Harry asked.

"No," Arthur replied.

"Great," Harry said with a smile. "Give him the antidote."

"Harry what's . . ." Arthur froze when he finally managed to make eye contact with the young boy. Those cold merciless eyes didn't belong to Harry Potter. How was he going to break it to Molly.

AN: Something that has been on my Hard Drive for a long time. I've spent the last few days sick and working so I haven't been doing what I'd have liked to be doing. Got a job interview in a few hours on the phone so I thought I'd do a little writing to relax.

"He may be a rabid dog," Bones gave a cold smile. "But he's my attack dog."



Working Title: It's Just Business

"Think you can let those freaks talk to me like that Boy?" Vernon growled. The purple faced man had waited until the magic users had left before starting his tirade. "You think there won't be consequences?" The angry man took a tight grip on the boy's arm and raised his hand.

Across the station, Hermione was watching with a frown on her face.

"That your friend hon?" Her father asked. "What's his name . . ."

"It's Harry dad," Hermione said absently. "Oh no," Hermione squeaked.

"That's his uncle?" Her father asked flatly.

Harry's head jerked violently after his uncle's first slap. "Finished?"

"Damn you boy," Vernon raised his hand for another punch.

"I don't think so." A voice sounded from behind.

"Wha?" Vernon turned and was met by Mr. Granger's fist.

"Try it with a grown man," the dentist hissed.

"You can't do this," Vernon screamed. The fat man's hand automatically came up to hold his broken nose.

"Get up ye' bloody coward," Granger shouted. "Get on your feet damn you."

"Is there a problem here gentlemen?" A deceptively calm voice asked.

"He attacked me constable," Vernon screamed. "I demand you arrest him."

"Is that true?"

"He hit the boy first," Hermione's father said. "I wasn't going to let him hit the boy again."

"That true son?"

"Yes sir," Harry agreed. "It's true."

"He's lying," Vernon shouted. "Little bastard's always making up stories."

"You'll get your chance to speak in a minute," the Bobby said calmly. "For now I suggest that you stay quiet."

"Why I . . ."

"I said quiet," the officer snapped. "Go on son."

"Yes sir," Harry said. "My uncle hit me and he was going to hit me again when Mr. Granger stopped him."

"Thank you son," the constable said with a smile. "Well?" He said with a glance at Vernon.

"Little bastard's my nephew," Vernon began. "S' been living with us since his parents died and saved the government the cost of two drunks on the dole."

"Did you hit him?"

"No I did not," Vernon said firmly.

"He did," one of the crowd shouted. "I saw him do it." The comment was followed by a mutter of agreement.

"It's the only thing the freak understands," Vernon tried to explain.

"On your feet sir," the police man ordered. "You can explain all you want when we get to the station."

"You can't do this," Vernon protested.

"Do you have any place to go son?" The constable asked kindly.

"I'll manage sir," Harry replied.

"Daddy," Hermione whispered to her father.

"He can stay with us," her father said with a sigh.

"Know the boy then?"

"He's my daughter's friend."

"Are you sure?"

He took another glance at his daughter. "Yes, I'm sure."

"Give me your address and a place where I can reach you and you may go."

"What about me?" Vernon demanded.

"You get to talk to me for a bit before you can go," the officer said reasonably.

"You can't do this."

"Just come along peacefully and I won't have to get rough."

"Thank you sir," Harry said after his uncle had been dragged off.

"Call me Alex," Hermione's father said. "You have your things ready?"

"I could just get a room at . . ."

"You're coming with us," Hermione said firmly. "Right daddy?"

"Yes Pumpkin," Alex agreed. "Get your things ready and I'll pull the car around."

"We'll be ready," Hermione said.

"Are you sure about this Hermione?"

"It'll be fine," Hermione dismissed her friend's concerns. "Here's the car."

"I'll help you get that into the back Harry," Alex offered as he got out of the car. "Why don't you take the front seat Harry," Alex suggested. "Your legs are a bit longer than Hermione's."

"Alright."

Hermione filled the ride home with happy chatter while Harry tried to come to grips that for one summer at least, he might not be forced to live with the Dursleys. "And here we are," Hermione finished as the pulled into a large house. The three of them got out of the car and entered the house.

"Juli, we're home." Alex called out. "And we brought a guest."

"Who is it Alexander?" A woman's voice replied.

"It's Harry mum," Hermione called out.

"Harry?" The voice was coming closer. "Let me see him. You've grown up since I last saw you Harry, I hardly recognised you."

"Hello Mrs. Granger," Harry greeted the woman.

"Call me Juli . . . or Juliette," Hermione's mother insisted. "What brings you here Harry?"

"Juliette?"

"My parents are Shakespearian actors," Juli explained. "It's where I got my name and where Hermione got hers."

"Hermione really got her name from the mutiny," Alex stage whispered. "Bloody Hermione is what I wanted to call her, thought it had a right nice ring to it but her mother wouldn't listen."

"Ahem," Juliette coughed. "As I was saying, what brings you here Harry?"

"I said he could stay for a bit," Alex said firmly. "I'll tell you about it later."

"If you like," she agreed. "I hope you like rancid yak butter," Juli began with a smile. "We're having Nepali food tonight and since I can never get fresh yak milk . . ."

"I might be able to help with that." Harry perked up. "I've got a . . . friend that can probably get any ingredient you'd like."

Hermione's parents shared a glance. "Maybe later," her mother said. "Tonight we're getting take out, just tell us what you'd like and it'll be at the door in thirty minutes or less."

"Uh . . ."

Hermione noticed her friend's helpless look and raced to the rescue. "We'll tell you when we've decided on something mum."

"If you like dear."

"Come on Harry." Hermione dragged her friend out of the room.

"Quiet boy isn't he?"

"Didn't make a sound when his uncle hit him," Alex agreed. "And kept his mouth shut when the bastard raised his hand for another punch."

"Who'd do such a thing?" Juliette said sadly. "What'd you do?"

"Broke the bastard's nose," Alex said with a hint of pride. "Would have done more but a bloody constable showed up before I had a chance to do much."

Juliette sighed. "Just . . . just wait until next time."

"Juliette?"

"You didn't do anything I wouldn't have tried," Juliette explained. "And I don't expect you to stand by while our daughter watches her friend get beaten."

"Thanks for understanding love."

IIIIIIIIII

"Chinese is good," Hermione said. "So's Indian . . . what do you think Harry?"

"Is Chinese the one where they put dog in it?" Harry asked.

"Where did you hear that?" Hermione snapped.

"Uh . . . Vernon," Harry replied.

"Oh . . . well he's wrong, Chinese is perfectly good."

"Ok," Harry said. "What do you recommend?"

"Have you ever had any of these things?"

"I don't think so," Harry said. "I had one of those little ball things Padama gave out once."

"Modak?" Hermione asked. Harry just shrugged helplessly. "Well did you like it?" Hermione persisted.

"It was good," Harry said.

"Indian it is then," Hermione said firmly.

"Ok," Harry agreed. "Are you sure it's ok for me to stay here?"

"Of course it is," Hermione said. "My father said so and my mother agreed so you're staying."

"Ok," Harry agreed. He wasn't going to argue too much about having to stay, he just didn't think he was lucky enough for things to keep going his way.

"Let's go tell my parents what we've decided," Hermione said.

"Sure," Harry agreed.

"We've decided what we want," Hermione announced as she rejoined her parents. "Khorma, Dahi Bara, and Modak for desert."

"Sounds fine to me," Alex agreed. "You?"

"I'll go order it," Juliette said.

"Why don't you take Crookshanks to your room and let him stretch out," Alex suggested. "Harry and I will unload the car."

"Alright daddy," Hermione agreed.

Alex waited until his daughter had left the room before turning to Harry. "You're a good friend of my daughter's aren't you Harry?"

"Yes," Harry agreed. "I am."

"Then you don't want to do anything to her that could hurt her future do you?"

"No sir," Harry said quickly.

"Harry . . . let me tell you something, I want to be a grandfather some day. I'd like nothing better then to have a few grandchildren to spoil . . . but not today." Alex said firmly. "Give it ten or so years and I'll be happy, understand?"

"I think so."

"Just don't do anything that will make me a grandfather before I'm ready and we'll get along fine," Alex said. "I know it seems hard when you're young, like you have to get every thing done now. But having children could really hurt your future. Hermione . . . don't tell her this, but Hermione was born before we were ready to have children. Her mother had just finished her degree and I still had a term to go. Money was a bit tight for the first few months, her mother couldn't work and I wasn't licenced to practice. Don't get me wrong, I love my daughter. I'd never change anything about her and her birth had brought nothing but joy to my life. Well . . . joy and frustration anyway. But . . . do you see where I'm going with this Harry?"

"I think so," Harry said. "But Hermione and I aren't like that, we're just friends."

"That's fine too," Alex said firmly. "If you two decide to get into a relationship then keep what I said in mind. If you don't decide to date

each other then I want you to be a friend and protect her from making any decisions that could be the wrong ones. Ok?"

"Ok," Harry agreed.

"Thank you," Alex said with a smile. "Now let's get those trunks."

The two of them moved the trunks into the house and the family chatted until their food arrived.

"So how do you like it Harry?" Hermione demanded.

"It's different," Harry replied. "Not bad," he added upon noticing his friend's look. "Just different."

"Good," Hermione said. "Wanna start studying after we finish eating?"

"Uh . . ."

"Why don't you wait a bit before you jump into that darling," Juliette suggested.

"Are you sure that's a good idea?" Hermione said with a frown. "We don't want to get too far behind the schedule I've drawn up."

"Plenty of time to do that later," Alex agreed. "In the mean time, it'd probably be best to take a week or two off to relax first."

"Ok daddy," Hermione said slowly. "Let me show you the spare room Harry." Hermione dragged her friend out of the room.

"Don't recall seeing her this excited for quite some time," Alex said to his wife after the two children had left the room.

"She gets lonely here," Juliette replied. "It's good to see her with someone her age for once."

"Now if we can just keep her away from the books for a little while," Alex said with a laugh. "Did you see the look on his face when she suggested studying?"

"Poor boy," Juliette laughed. "I wonder if she's like that at school."



|||||||

"Wake up kid," Alex's voice called out. "It's noon."

"Hwa?" Harry put on his glasses.

"Juliette managed to talk Hermione into going to work with her so it's just the two of us today and I got tired of waiting for you to wake on your own."

"Ok," Harry agreed. "What do you need me to do?"

"My wife thought you might want to go shopping," Alex replied. "I figured you might want to do something fun but what do I know."

"I wouldn't mind having the chance to get some new clothes," Harry agreed slowly.

"Then get dressed and we can head into London to take care of things," Alex said. Harry dressed and met the man in the living room.

"What now?" Harry asked.

"Do you have access to any money or are you going to need some," the man said bluntly.

"I've got money," Harry said. "But I'll need to get it out of my Gringotts account."

"Not a problem," Alex agreed. "If you don't mind my asking, what kind of interest do you get from your account?"

"Interest?" Harry said blankly.

"It's the money a bank gives you for having an account with them," Alex said. "No idea what I'm talking about huh?"

"Afraid not," Harry said.

"Well . . . ask for a statement and I'll explain what it all means if you like."

"Thanks," Harry replied.

"Shall we go then?"

"Ok." Harry followed the older man out of the house and to a small car parked on the curb.

"It's unlocked," Alex said as he slid into the driver's seat. "Feel free to adjust the seat to make yourself more comfortable."

"Thanks," Harry said. The boy spent a minute or two fiddling with the seat until it was to his satisfaction.

"If you don't mind Harry," Alex began. "Why don't we pick up a set of clothing first and you can pay me after you've had a chance to make a withdrawal. That way we can take advantage of the lower prices outside the city and with any luck we won't have to spend so much time looking over clothes."

"If you think that's best," Harry said slowly. He was completely out of his depth when it came to buying new clothes.

"Good." Alex turned into a small parking lot. "Let's see if we can be in and out in less than ten minutes shall we?"

"Yeah." They walked in and Harry quickly selected a few items of clothing, Alex paid for them, and they returned to the car. "How long?"

"Just under eight minutes," Alex replied. "Guess it was a good thing there weren't any other customers."

"Guess so. So why did Hermione go to work with Juliette?"

"My wife wanted to spend a bit of girl time with our daughter," Alex replied. "Least that's what she said, could be they're plotting against us."

"Plotting against us?"

"Wouldn't put it past them."

|||||

"We've found out why Harry didn't go home with his relatives Headmaster," Tonks said slowly. "And I don't think you're going to like it."

"What is it?"

"Harry's uncle tried to beat him up in the station," Tonks said. The woman's hair shifted through several colors. "And has admitted to the metropolitan police that it wasn't an isolated incident."

"Where is Harry now?"

"We think he went home with Hermione," Tonks said.

"Good . . . what of Vernon?"

"He's been released," Tonks said. "And the police are looking for Harry to get his statement. What should we do Headmaster?"

"Nothing for now," Dumbledore sighed. "Harry is safe where he is and I'd venture to say that he's happier too. As for the Dursleys . . . keep me apprised if you learn anything new."

"Yes Headmaster," Tonks agreed.

"You may go." Dumbledore dismissed the young Auror. "Harry . . . I knew your life was difficult but I never knew it was so bad. Can you forgive an old man his folly?"

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"While we're in London, I may as well introduce you to my broker." Alex began. "I think you'll like Archidamus. He's a great guy and the fact that he doesn't charge a commission when I make my own trades is the only thing that lets me have my hobby."

"Why doesn't he charge you?"

"Might be because he's my best mate," Alex began. "But it's probably because I married his sister. I choose not to speculate."

"He's your brother in law?"

"With a name like Archidamus?" Alex asked with a laugh. "Only one family would inflict that on a child."

"Oh."

"I'd suggest that we stop by your bank first to get your statement," Alex continued. "Might not be a bad idea to run it past Archidamus to get his opinion."

"Fine with me," Harry agreed. The car pulled up to the curb and the two of them got out and walked through the alley to the bank. "Excuse me," Harry said to one of the tellers.

"What is it?"

"I wanted to get an account statement," Harry said. "If you don't mind."

"Key," the goblin demanded. "There will also be a one galleon fee charged against your account."

"That's fine," Harry agreed.

"Here is the statement to all three of your accounts," the goblin handed Harry a paper. "Each one has a separate listing for deposits, withdrawals, and fees. Will that be all?"

"Three accounts?"

"The Potter account, your trust account, and the Black account. Was there anything else you needed?"

"No, thank you."

"Next," the goblin called out.

Harry walked back to Alex and handed him the paper. "Could you help me make sense of this?"

"Sure Harry," Alex agreed. "Let's see . . . hmmm, this is odd."

"What is it?"

"It says here that they're charging you a fee of one Galleon a month to keep your account," Alex said with an odd look on his face. "I wouldn't worry too much about that just now, you're also taking in five hundred galleons a month from . . . somewhere. Uh, this account here is your trust account. It has about three hundred thousand galleons in it. This second account is your family account and it has about two million galleons in it. This last account is the Black account and it has . . . wow, fifteen million galleons in it. So your assets total roughly." The man paused for a few seconds. "At six pounds a galleon, roughly one hundred and three point eight million pounds."

"Wow," Harry said in shock. "I never realised I had that much."

"Shame they aren't really made out of gold," Alex said with a laugh. "Or you'd have quite a bit more than that."

"Uh . . . I think they're made out of gold," Harry said slowly. "Least that's what I was always told."

"Why don't we ask one of the goblins," Alex suggested. "Before we get excited about this."

"Ok," Harry agreed.

"Excuse me," Alex asked one of the tellers. "But I had a question."

"What is it?" The goblin demanded.

"How much gold is in a Galleon?"

"Galleons are made by the Goblin nation and certified to carry exactly three pennyweights of gold," the goblin explained. "They are then charmed to prevent tampering and as such, a small charge is placed against each coin for the guarantee."

"Is that why I couldn't cut it?" Harry asked.

"Yes," the goblin agreed. "In order to protect the Gringotts reputation, Wizarding currency have several protection and durability charms."

"What about bullion?" Alex asked. "Since a Galleon is more expensive because of the charms and what not, it stands to reason that Harry should be able to convert his Galleons into bullion at a fairly good rate."

"Gringotts charges a ten percent fee for every guaranteed coin," the goblin replied. "So one galleon would buy an equal amount of gold plus ten percent."

"Can you transfer to a muggle bank?" Alex demanded.

"Deal with muggles?" The goblin asked in disgust.

"That's what I figured," Alex said with a nod. "Harry, can I talk with you outside for a moment?"

"What is it?" Harry asked.

"Harry," Alex began. "One troy ounce of gold is worth about two hundred and fifty two pounds. That's just over three galleons. You have seventeen point three million galleons, plus ten percent equals . . . two million, eight hundred fifty four thousand, five hundred troy ounces. That's . . . seven hundred nineteen million, three hundred thirty four thousand pounds."

"That's a lot of money," Harry said in shock.

"Yes it is," Alex agreed. "Harry, I think it might be a good idea to wait until we have a chance to talk with Archidamus before you do anything with your money."

"If you say so," Harry agreed.

"More then half a billion pounds," Alex whispered to himself in shock. "I'll be right back Harry, I just want to convert my pocket money into gold before we go."

"Ok," Harry agreed. Alex rejoined him a few minutes later.

"Let's go Harry." They walked back to their car and came to a stop infront of a large building. "This is where he has his office," Alex

explained. The two of them got out of the car and took the elevator up several floors. "Hey Archie," Alex called out as he walked through one of the doors.

"Alex," Archidamus replied. "How's the family?"

"Doing good, let me introduce you to Hermione's friend Harry."

"Always a pleasure to meet one of my niece's friends," Archidamus said. "What brings you two here?"

"This," Alex said as he dumped a large bar of gold on his brother in law's desk.

"I'll presume you didn't steal this," Archidamus said with a smile.

"I got it legally," Alex agreed.

"Well, the first thing we need to do is make sure it's real." Archidamus said. "One moment." The man reached into his desk and pulled out a metal letter opener. "Well," he said as he scratched the gold bar. "It's heavy and soft."

"For the sake of argument," Alex began. "What would you suggest I do if I came across a large amount of these?"

"Refine it and sell it," Archidamus said. "Or refine it and issue certificates, or refine it and hold it, or combine these things. For the sake of argument, the Swiss don't consider tax evasion a crime. So if you had a way to get it to a Swiss refiner then I'd suggest that you bank it in Switzerland and put it in a numbered account in a Swiss bank. The Geneva Canton has some of the strictest laws, so I'd look there first."

"Thanks Archie," Alex said. "What about this small amount?"

"I know a couple of jewelers that might be willing to buy it," Archidamus said. "But I couldn't sell much to them."

"Would you get a better deal if you traded it for finished stuff?"

"It's possible," Archidamus said with a shrug. "This isn't really my area."

"Do whatever you think is best," Alex ordered. "Before I forget, you wouldn't happen to know what the interest rate is in a Swiss account would you?"

"In a money market account it averages about three to four percent, Swiss Bankers are very good at managing money."

AN: What happens next, Harry opens a numbered Swiss bank account and deposits his money. Harry converts pounds into gold into pounds into gold until the goblins refuse to convert any more. Harry introduces credit cards to the wizarding world and laughs as many pure blood families rack up enormous debt. And they all lived happily ever after. I had ment to work on something else today, but I guess finishing this idea is good enough for me. This idea like most of my odd ideas is up for grabs, it's possible that I'll pick it up at some point but it's also unlikely that I'll get to it.

OMAKE:

"The old man wants to see you Mr. Dursley," the secretary said through the intercom.

"S'about time," Vernon growled. "I've been waiting years for the old bastard to retire." Vernon stormed out of his office and down the hall to the office of the CEO. "Tell him I'm here," Vernon barked at the receptionist.

"Mr. Grunnings said you should just walk right in," the woman said without looking up.

"Of course," Vernon agreed. "You wanted to see me?" He asked as he walked into the room.

"Have a seat Dursley," the old man said. "Would you like something to drink?"

"Brandy," Vernon said quickly. "No, the large glass."



"Of course," the old man agreed. "Do you know how long I've headed this company?"

"Nearly fifty years," Vernon answered immediately.

"Yes, since the end of the war. "The old man said with a sigh, recently . . . recently something has happened that makes me wonder if it isn't time to step down."

"What happened?" Vernon asked, inwardly he was jumping for joy. This was it.

"One of our major shareholders asked me a question," the old man replied. "He wanted to know how you could afford your new cars and your large house."

"R . . . really?" Vernon asked nervously.

"I of course told him that I had every confidence in you," the old man continued. "I told him that I assumed you came into a bit of money or . . . or something." The old man took a deep breath. "But on his insistence, we decided to launch an investigation."

"Oh?" Vernon squeaked.

"You've stolen nearly one million pounds from the company," the old man said sadly. "In my grandfather's time we'd have left you alone in a room with a pistol and expected you to do the honorable thing avoiding disgrace to you and to the company. Now . . . now I'm afraid that we will have to turn this over to the police. You have twenty four hours to clear out your office and say goodbye to your family, I'm sorry it had to end like this Vernon."

Vernon rose from his chair and walked back to his office stiffly without saying a word and sat in his chair. How did things go wrong? He asked himself, he wasn't supposed to get caught. What would this do to his nice normal life. Despite himself, Vernon imagined the police coming to his house and dragging him to the curb in chains. He imagined the neighbors watching and gossiping behind his back.

Finally, Vernon's gaze came to rest on his belt. The honorable thing, the thought sounded off in his head. "I can still do the honorable thing," Vernon whispered to himself. "I can avoid the disgrace."

Vernon attached his belt to one of the exposed beams and wrapped the other end around his neck. Taking one last breath, Vernon kicked his chair and began swinging. It wasn't supposed to hurt this much, he tried to scream. I've changed my mind, Vernon's hands clawed at his throat. I want to live, I want . . .

Vernon's former secretary found him dangling five minutes later and her scream summoned others.

"Couldn't take the stress anymore," old man Grunnings said sadly. "I want everyone to wait in the lobby for the authorities to arrive. I'll stay with the body." The old man waited until the people shuffled out of the room before he picked up the phone and dialed a number. "Mr. Potter? . . . yes, I'm afraid that it's my sad duty to tell you that your uncle, Vernon Dursley has committed suicide . . . yes quite painful I'd say, he died of slow strangulation . . . yes I'll see you at the next board meeting, goodbye."

Omake: A little common sense . . .

"Wands out?" Cedric looked around nervously.

"We could do that," Harry nodded. "Or we could grab the trophy again to see if it brings us back to Hogwarts."

"Good idea," Cedric smiled.

The two boys grabbed the trophy and were transported back to Hogwarts and there was much rejoicing.

Omake: Dobby the Mighty

"Hey Dobby," Harry was depressed.

"Hello Harry Potter sir," the little house elf smiled. "What's wrong?"

"Voldemort," Harry spit out the word. "Making my life hell."

"Does Harry Potter sir want Vodemart to go away?" Dobby asked cautiously.

"I want him to disappear," Harry nodded. "And never come back, I want him to go somewhere that he could never hurt anyone again and I'd like his death eaters to go with him."

"Ok," Dobby nodded then disappeared with a pop

"Dobby?" Harry looked around, "DOBBY?"

"Yes Harry Potter sir?" The little elf looked up, "is you needing something else?"

"What happened?" Harry frantically checked the small elf for injuries, "are you hurt."

"Harry Potter sir is worried if Dobby is hurt?" Dobby was ready to burst into tears, "Harry Potter sir is a good and kind wizard that worries about Dobby."

"What happened?" Harry started to relax, "I was worried that you were going to go after Voldemort and all his death eaters."

"Dobby took care of them Harry Potter sir," Dobby nodded. "He put them where house elves put garbage, now they can't hurt anyone and Harry Potter sir will be happy."

"Oh," Harry nodded dumbly. "Thanks Dobby . . . I guess the power he knew not was an angry house elf."

OMAKE: I think Unicorns are kick ass . . .

"You can't mean for us to raise him Choda boy?" Orgasmo asked his friend and side kick.

"If not us then who?" Choda boy asked with a raised eyebrow, "with us he will be great. With them he'll be abused."

"You're right Choda boy," Orgasmo nodded. "It's the only thing to do."

The Hogwarts, ten years later.

"Ah Mr. Potter," Snape sneered at the young boy in the strange jump suit. "School uniforms not good enough for you?"

"Silence fiend," Harry raised a strange device and shot a ray at Snape.

"Ohhhhhhh," Snape collapsed. "Fif . . . fifty points to . . . Gryffindor."

## Death of a Hero

"May I have a moment of your time Harry?" Dumbledore stopped Harry on the way to the train, "I promise that it won't take but a moment."

"Of course sir," Harry agreed.

"Harry . . . this isn't easy to say," Dumbledore began. "But I'm going to have to ask you not to leave your relatives house without an Order escort this summer . . . I'd also like you to consider leaving your wand with me."

"But . . . but why sir?" Harry demanded.

"Harry's, I have recently come into some information that shakes my faith in our government." Dumbledore said sadly, "I'm afraid that there is a plot to discredit you and have your wand snapped. They plan to either provoke you into using magic. Or failing that, to manufacture evidence."

"You want me to leave my wand here so I can prove that I couldn't have used magic?"

"That is correct," Dumbledore agreed sadly.

"Alright sir." Harry handed his wand over. "I trust you."

IIIIIIIIII

"Do you know how to win a chess game Draco?" Voldemort asked his newest recruit.

"To kill the king my lord?"

"Close," Voldemort continued in a low voice. "You win by cutting the king off, by preventing him from making a move."

"Yes my Lord," Draco agreed dutifully.

"So how do you propose we beat your Headmaster?" Voldemort prompted.

"Trap him my Lord?" Draco asked. "Pin him down so that he can't stop us?"

"Very good Draco," Voldemort said. "We're going to tie up his forces, and those of the Ministry. After they've committed themselves, then . . . then we take their pawn."

|||||

"This is Susan Bones," Susan screamed into the fire place. "My Aunt is holding off several Death Eaters and the wards are about to fall."

"Help is on the way," the head in the fireplace said calmly. "I'm sending every available Auror, you just have to hang on for a few minutes."

"Hurry," Susan sobbed. "Please hurry."

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"Headmaster," Molly called through the floo. "Our wards are falling, we need help."

"Don't worry Molly," Dumbledore said with a smile. "I'm calling the Order, I promise that your family won't be harmed."

"Thank you Headmaster," Molly said in relief. "I knew I could count on you."

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Harry sighed, he was in the middle of the most boring summer to date. Thanks to Dumbledore's warning and a few select words to the Dursley family. He wasn't even allowed to do yard work thanks to a few select words to the Dursley family from his keepers. His first sign that something had gone wrong was two loud pops from the front yard signaling the departure of his two guards.

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"That the place?" One of the death eaters indicated number 4 with a wave. The other death eaters were spared from having to answer by the appearance of a large white owl. "Never mind, kill the bird before it has a chance to get help." The death eaters absent mindedly flung several spells at Harry's pet before continuing towards the front door.

"What's all this then?" Vernon called as the masked men burst through the door.

"Avada Kedavra," the lead death eater incanted. "You two go after the aunt and the cousin, I'll get Potter."

"Right," the others agreed. The lead death eater slowly made his way up the stairs towards the room that their informant had said they'd find Potter.

"Throw out your wand Potter," the death eater called out.

"Come and get it," Harry replied through the door.

"Reducto," the death eater blew off the door. "The Dark Lord requests a meeting," the death eater said as he walked through the door. "You wouldn't want to oof." Harry raised his hand and hit the prone death eater in the head several more times with his makeshift club. Bending down, Harry grabbed the death eater's wand and gave it a wave.

"Guess that was too much to hope for," Harry said in disappointment when the wand failed to react. Dropping the useless wand, Harry crept down the stairs towards the sounds of his screaming relatives.

IIIIIIII

"Crucio," the death eater laughed. "Scream for me fatty, Crucio."

"Hit 'em again," his partner said.

"Crucio." the other death eater complied. "What's taking him?"

"Maybe he wanted to have a bit of fun with Potter before we take him to our lord?" His partner laughed.

"He'd better not have too much fun, wouldn't want to deprive the Lord of his prize."

"Yeah, I . . ." the death eater felt a sharp pain in his kidney and screamed. "It's a trap."

"Avada Kedavra, Avada Kedavra, Avada Kedavra, Avada Kedavra." The Surviving death eater flung the curse in every direction. "Damn it." The man pulled out a small medalion. "We need reinforcements, Potter still has a few keepers."

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A beaten, bloody, and above all triumphant Order returned to their Headquarters to meet and discuss the raid that they'd just foiled.

"I still say it doesn't make sense," Moody growled. "A attempt on Bones and the Weasleys on the same night."

"What doesn't make sense about it Mad-Eye?" Tonks asked. "It kept the Ministry from supporting the Order and the Order from helping the Ministry, might have worked if they'd had more men."

"That's the point," Moody snapped. "They do have more of the bastards, so what do you suspect they were doing."

"I'm sure . . . no," Dumbledore gasped as Harry's owl flew in and collapsed onto the table with a pitiful hoot. "It's Harry," Dumbledore screamed. "Their target is Harry." The Order reassembled and arrived on Privet Drive just in time to see the house collapse in a fiery inferno.

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Arnold Lovegood felt another tear slide down his face as he tried again to force his hands to write the news of Harry Potter's last stand. "What can I write?" He asked himself, "and how am I going to tell Luna."

"Tell me what daddy?" Luna's voice asked. Arnold felt a chill go up his back.



"Luna . . . honey . . . I have some very bad news."

AN: Got this idea by reading about trench raids during the first world war. Started thinking about Harry using the same tactics against death eaters and it might have ended up in old soldiers if I hadn't had the idea of Dumbledore taking his wand before the summer. So what happens next? The wizarding world turns Harry into a symbol, they scream 'Remember Harry Potter' as their battle cry maybe? Thought I'd also make Volde a bit more intelligent then most seem to, less sadistic too. Like I said before, I'm not too happy with the way this turned out. I wanted to try a slightly different way of writing and I think it fell flat. As always, if anyone wants this then they are welcome to it.

Omake: For those that wanted Harry to survive.

"Who's . . . who's there?" Harry demanded.

"Winky is here Harry Potter sir."

"You saved me?"

"Yes Harry Potter sir," the little elf agreed. "Winky . . . Winky wishes a boon Harry Potter sir . . . for saving you."

"What is it?"

"Winky wishes to become Harry Potter sir's elf," Winky replied firmly.

"Are you sure?"

"Yes Harry Potter sir," Winky agreed. "Winky wishes to get no pay and no vacation."

"Alright," Harry agreed. "But you must keep wearing clothes."

"Clothes?" The elf recoiled in horror.

"Your appearance reflects on me," Harry replied. "If not clothes, then you must wear something that looks good."

"Winky can wear a silk pillow case?" The elf suggested.

"Fine," Harry agreed. "And I'm also going to set up an account for all of my elves to buy things for themselves?"

"Pay?" Winky looked ready to vomit.

"Maintenance," Harry said quickly. "Food, pillow cases, that sort of thing."

"Winky can do that Harry Potter sir," the elf agreed slowly. "And food?"

"Any food," Harry confirmed.

Omake: Revenge

Harry was sitting in his room lamenting the fact that he was related to the human trash known to the outside world as the Dursley family when he decided that he couldn't take it anymore, he had to get out if only for a little while. Harry got up and walked down the stairs towards the front door.

"Where are you going?" His aunt growled.

"Out," Harry replied.

"Be back before dark or spend the night on a park bench," she said with a sniff.

"Fine," he agreed.

A few scenes go here, not sure what.

"Harry," Hermione sobbed.

"Hermione?" Harry approached his friend. "What's wrong."

"They're dead," Hermione waled. "All dead."

"Your parents?" Harry pulled his friend into a hug.

"No." Hermione buried her face into his chest. "Ron . . . Ginny, the Weasleys all dead."

Harry's insides felt like they were made of ice. "Tell me what happened."

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"You can't kill me," Lucius laughed. "Cast any one of the unforgivable spells and you spend the rest of your life in Azkaban."

"You're right," Harry agreed. "We couldn't possibly risk that could we Hermione?"

"No Harry," the girl said flatly. "We couldn't risk leaving any trace of what we're about to do."

"That's right," Harry said with a smile. "That's why we're going to do things the muggle way." Lucius watched as the girl placed a large metal box on the table. "Now I realise that as a pureblood, you won't know what some of these things are. That's why I've asked Hermione to explain."

"This is a pair of needle nosed pliers," the girl said in the same dead tone. "It's usually used to work with wire, that's not what we're going to do with it but that is the normal usage. This is a blow torch, the common use is to join metal pipe fittings. To do this a flame comes out and it is used to melt . . ."

"I think he gets the idea," Harry interrupted. "Skip to the next one."

"Alright Harry," Hermione said with the first bit of emotion that Lucius had heard from the girl. "This is a hammer, it is used to bound nails and extract nails that have already been pounded. And finally, this is a cordless drill. It's normal use does not matter because it will not work here due to the wards around your house. We are going to use these tools to hurt you severely until you tell us every thing we wish to know. Do you understand?"

"You won't get away with this," Lucius screamed. "Do you hear me?"

"I asked if you understood," Hermione said mechanically.

"I think he does," Harry said with a smile. "Hand me that hammer, I feel like playing this little piggy."

"You don't usually use a hammer to play this little piggy Harry," Hermione said as she handed the tool to her friend.

"You do to play the version I'm thinking of," Harry replied.

"Ok Harry."

Omake: A Rather Depressing scene . . .

Idea popped into my head that I don't think I'll write. Harry arrives at Hogwarts and he is a very quiet child, he doesn't have friends, he doesn't take part in any activity that isn't mandatory, he just kinda drifts through. One of the Professors contacts an old friend to investigate.

"Pomona," Moody said slowly. "I think you need to sit down."

"What is it mad eye?"

"Just have a seat," the scarred man commanded. "I'm afraid your hunch about young Potter was true. Two years ago, Potter . . . Harry befriended a shy girl in his neighborhood. The two of them were almost inseparable, each the other's only friend."

"So what happened?" Sprout asked with growing dread.

"The girl came from a large family," Moody continued. "She was the only daughter and also the youngest child . . . because of this suffered quite a bit of abuse. One night . . . one night they got a bit too rough and she was badly injured. Rather than take her to the hospital, her father buried her in the basement."

"No . . ." Pomona whispered.

"Harry . . . Harry came to their front door looking for her for three days before he stopped believing it when they told him that his friend was sick, or had moved to a relatives house. It's not clear what excuses they used." Moody said mechanically. "On the fourth night he made

his way into the house and was somehow able to find . . . to find what remained of his only friend in the world."

"Alastor don't tell me . . ."

"Harry was the only thing to leave that house alive," the old auror said quietly. "Fire engines arrived an hour later to find the house in flames. Inspector said that large amounts of accelerant had been poured around the beds and he also noted that several of the exits had been blocked. The body of the young girl had been removed from the house prior to the inferno and carefully wrapped in a worn blanket."

"That poor boy," Sprout gasped.

"There's just a bit more Pomona," Alastor said gently. "When the emergency services arrived, they found Harry sitting on the lawn cradling the girl's body. He told the first fireman not to bother entering the house as he'd stopped hearing screams several minutes before and suspected that everyone inside was dead. Due to his age and the circumstances surrounding the crime, Harry was given a psychological evaluation. They noted that the circumstances surrounding the crime were unlikely to occur again and ruled that Harry was no threat to society."

So what's the fall out? I suspect that the Dursley family is going to be much more cautious around young Harry Potter, that's assuming that the way he was treated didn't come up in an investigation. God knows how else things would change. Looking over this again, this could be part of a fairly interesting Hufflepuff Harry fic. A child so loyal that he wiped out an entire family for murdering his only friend. Could be fairly readable. If anyone wants all or part of this, they are welcome to it.

## Peas Porridge Hot

Harry woke up and stumbled over to the toilet to void his bladder. "Oh yeah," he mumbled with a smile. "That's it . . . ahhhhhhhhhhhhh," he groaned in deep satisfaction.

To the rest of the world, it looked more like this.

The students were gathered in the great hall to have their first breakfast of the term when a naked boy appeared on the floor in a flash of light. They watched in shock as he got up, stumbled to the head table, and urinated in the Headmaster's porridge.

"Ahem," Dumbledore tried to attract the stranger's attention.

"Oh yeah," the stranger replied.

"Excuse me," Dumbledore tried again.

"That's it," the stranger said smugly.

"Uh."

"Ahhhhhhhhhhh." The stranger groaned in deep satisfaction.

"Potter," McGonagall screamed. "What is the meaning of this." Harry's eyes shot open.

"Uh . . . hello Professor."

"It wasn't me Professor," James protested. "Great idea though, good one mate."

"This means something," Harry mumbled when a boy that looked like his dead father jumped to his feet and protested his innocence.

"Just admit it," Lilly said in exasperation. "Honestly, I thought you'd outgrown this sort of thing."

"Way to go James," Sirius cheered.

"Yep, definitely means something." Harry restated his earlier statement.

"Care to introduce yourself young man?" Dumbledore asked with a tin . . . that's twinkle in his eye.

"Sure thing," Harry agreed. "The name's Harry I mean not Harry."

"Well Mr. Notharry, welcome to Hogwarts." Dumbledore said grandly. "If you don't mind my asking, where does your middle name Amin come from?"

"Africa," Harry said without missing a beat. "So this is Hogwarts huh?"

"Yes it is," Dumbledore confirmed. "Are you the new exchange student?"

"Sure, why don't we go with that." Harry said. "Do you have my scholarship money ready?"

"Scholarship money?" Dumbledore said dumbly.

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "You know the money needed to buy my clothes, books, wand, pornography, etc."

"Pornography?" McGonagall asked.

"From the Latin words porne and grapho," Harry explained. "Literally pictures of prostatutes."

"Very good Mr. Notharry," Dumbledore said in approval. "Five points to . . . uh."

"Why don't you just add money to my scholarship," Harry suggested.

"Excellent idea," Dumbledore agreed. "Why don't we go work out the details right now?"

"Sure, let's go."

"From the future?" Dumbledore asked after the two of them were out of sight.

"Yep, how'd you know?"

"It happens," Dumbledore replied with a shrug. "Can't have this much magic in one place without odd stuff happening. Don't worry about not changing things or any of that. Things changed the moment you came back in time, nothing you can do one way or another that will change things."

"Cool . . . the money?"

"Comes from a special Hogwarts fund set up to benefit time travelers," Dumbledore said. "You may have five thousand Galleons and one school robe before you make your trip to Diagon Alley."

"That's it?"

"That's it," Dumbledore confirmed. "Here's your sack of gold, and here's a robe."

"That's a old used sock."

"Well." Dumbledore waved his wand. "Now it's a robe."

"Cheap bastard," Harry muttered under his breath.

"What was that?"

"Where's the nearest floo?"

"Right behind you," Dumbledore said. "Have a nice trip."

"I'll give you a nice trip," Harry muttered. "Diagon Alley." Harry jumped through the floo and arrived in the Leaky Cauldron.

"Afternoon stranger," Tom greeted him. "Now, I try not to judge."

"But you're wondering why I'm not wearing this robe in my hands?" Harry asked.



"That's right."

"It itches," Harry explained. "Any other questions?"

"Nope, that covers it."

"Great," Harry said. "Where can I buy some lottery tickets?"

"Right here," Tom said. "But you better hurry, the drawing is in a few seconds."

"Right," Harry said as he checked the date and time. "Put down . . ." Harry rattled off a long string of numbers. "Got that?"

"Got it," Tom confirmed. "Buy it quick."

"Here you go," Harry dropped a few coins on the table. "Did we make it?"

"Just in time," Tom confirmed. The two of them watched as the numbers on Harry's ticket lit up one by one until the whole thing was flashing. "Never seen anyone get all one hundred numbers before," Tom said in shock. "How'd you know how to do that?"

"Lost a bet and had to memorise some obscure things," Harry replied. To this day he could never figure out why he had to memorise the winning numbers for the largest unclaimed pot in history but it sure was lucky that the drawing happened to be on the same day he arrived in the past.

"Oh . . ." Tom seemed to consider Harry's reply. "Better get down to Gringotts to claim your win."

"Later Tom," Harry said on his way out the door. Harry ignored the stares as he walked to Gringotts wizarding bank, he felt no need to put on an uncomfortable robe just to conform to their sensibilities.

"Hold it." Two imposing goblins blocked his way.

"What can I do for you two?" Harry asked.

"Can we interest you in a life insurance policy?" The goblins asked.

"Nope."

"Care to start a retirement fund?"

"Don't need that either."

"How about a box of goblin scout cookies?"

"Got mint chocolate?"

"One box left," the goblins said.

"How much?"

"One Galleon a box."

"I'll take it," Harry said. The goblins handed him his box of cookies and allowed him to enter the bank. Harry walked up to counter and presented his ticket. "Pay up."

"Care to make any other wagers?" The goblin asked hopefully.

"Put half of it on the Harpies to win," Harry agreed.

"You do know that they are behind by one hundred points do you not?"

"Yep," Harry agreed.

"And that the game has been going for two weeks?"

"I have a feeling that they'll come out of nowhere and win in the next five minutes," Harry said with a shrug. He'd also spent a lot of time memorising the outcomes of every Quidditch in the last fifty years.

"Care to place a side wager on that?" The goblin asked eagerly.

"Sure," Harry agreed. "What odds are you going to give me?"

"Two thousand to three?"

"How about a million to one?"

"How about two thousand to one?"

"I'll put five thousand on it," Harry agreed. "Want another side bet on the point spread?"

"You a seer?"

"Nope."

"Then sure," the goblin said. "A gentlemen's wager of fifty galleons?"

"Fifty galleons says the Harpies will win with one point," Harry said. "Deal?"

"Deal," the goblin agreed. "Now if you'll excuse me, I need to place a couple wagers of my own."

"Oh?"

"You said you weren't a seer yes?"

"Yes."

"But I just realised that you never said anything about being a time traveler."

"Oh . . . good point." The goblin returned and turned on the wireless.

"Well, it seems that you win all of your wagers," the goblin said with a grin. "Pleasure doing business with you Mr . . ."

"I've been going by the name of Notharry," Harry said. "Harry Amin Notharry."

"More imaginative then the last time traveler."

"Oh?"

"Yes, I believe he called himself. Uh . . . M'name? Well, I'm not a criminal."

"I'd just woken up," Harry protested. "I'm not my best before I've had a chance to wake up."

"Will you be opening an account with us Mr. Notharry?"

"What interest rates are you offering?"

"What do you remember about the stock market?" The goblin countered.

"Not much," Harry admitted. "Few chances to make a lot of money if nothing changes."

"Write them down," the goblin said. "And I think you'll find our interest rates on savings accounts to be very competitive."

"I'll send you a letter later," Harry agreed. "For now, I just need enough to go shopping for clothes and such."

"You do know that you can just sign a draft against your account do you not?"

"Really?" Harry asked. "Then I guess there's no more reason to stick around, see you later."

"Goodbye Mr. Notharry." Harry walked out of Gringotts and his attention was immediately captured by a window display. Walking into the shop, Harry walked right up to the front counter and cleared his throat.

"Can I help you?" The shopkeeper asked as he turned around. "Uh . . . you did realise that you weren't wearing any clothing."

"Yup," Harry agreed. "Goblin scout cookie?"

"I'm on a diet," the shopkeeper said quickly. "What can I do for you?"

"What's that thing in the window?"

"That item is what we in the business call a 'forger's pen.' It's a borderline legal item that is used to replicate writing styles and signatures." The Shopkeeper continued, "it also replicates magical

signatures, blood signatures, and it impossible to detect the difference between a copy made by the pen and an original document."

"Oh?" Harry regarded the item with undisguised intrest. "How is it at making wills?"

"It excels at making wills," the shopkeeper said. "But that is of course illegal unless you are merely making a copy of an original document."

"I'll take it," Harry said.

"You do know that as a restricted item, it must be registered with the Ministry don't you?"

"Of course," Harry agreed. "Just let me see that pen . . . Lucius Malfoy," he said as he signed 'his' name.

"Very good Mr. Malfoy, and how will you be paying for this?"

"Just take it out of my family vault," Harry said. "Let me sign a draft for you." Harry spent the rest of the day shopping and he returned to Hogwarts with new clothes and such.

"Mr. Notharry," McGonagall met him at the door. "The Headmaster has requested that you meet with him as soon as you arrive."

"Sure, I just got to take care of some business first." Harry demured.

"Now Mr. Notharry," McGonagall said sternly. "The password is Unko."

"Unko?"

"Some sort of Japanese candy," McGonagall explained. "Now come with me."

"Yes Professor," Harry agreed with a sigh. Harry followed McGonagall to the Headmaster and took a seat.

"The Headmaster should be here soon," McGonagall said. "I expect you to wait here until he arrives."

"But . . ."

"No buts Mr. Notharry," McGonagall interrupted. "You will wait right here until he arrives."

"Fine." Harry's attention returned to the urgent problem that he'd been unable to take care of earlier . . . he really had to use the bathroom. The minutes went by and the . . . pressure increased.

"Where the hell is he?" Harry growled. He'd been waiting in the Headmaster's office for several hours now and he had to go . . . uh . . . you know. "That's it," Harry screamed. "I can't hold it any longer." Harry eyed the Headmaster's dust bin, the Headmaster's desk, and finally the Headmaster's . . .

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"And that's what I needed to speak with you about," Dumbledore finished.

"None at this time." Harry glanced down at his new watch. "Well," he said with a yawn. "I've got to go now."

"You may use my private toilet," the Headmaster said magnanimously.

"Already used your fancy toilet over there," Harry said with a wave towards the corner. "I ment that I've got to leave."

"Fancy toilet?" The Headmaster said with growing dread.

"Yup," Harry agreed. "Bye bye." With that, Harry jumped out of his seat and walked out of the office. He'd barely gotten to the base of the steps when Dumbledore's scream of dismay reached his ears. There was surprisingly little consequence resulting from Harry's actions, though most students did find it a bit odd when the Headmaster decided to add a six hour course to teach the difference between a toilet and a Pensieve.

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Lucius Malfoy massaged his temples. A huge headache was all that was left from yesterday fun. He was approaching the end of his time at Hogwarts and his father already wanted him to insure the continuance of the family line. At least the girl he chose was the future sister-in-law of Lucius's friend. Otherwise it would be unbearable. As it was hee could always count on Rodophus to see when he was about to be sick from courting the boring and somewhat stupid girl and take him out to have some fun.

At the moment though as he woke up on the floor of the common room, he had a chance to enjoy certain drawbacks of his friend method. He was just about to go looking for a hangover potion when the flames in the fireplace flamed green showing a frowning expression of Hostilianus Malfoy.

"Lucius!" the man exclaimed about four times too loud for the young man "Look at yourself! Is this how the heir of Malfoy family is supposed to present himself?"

"I haven't got a chance to..."

"No matter. What I want to know is do you have any idea how could 30,000 disappear from the family account when I'm sure they were there yesterday morning."

"Father?"

"What was even more interesting was that when I enquired about it I was informed that the whole amount was withdrawn by my own son in various places on Diagon and Knockturn Alleys. Do you have anything to add to that, Lucius?"

"Father, I..."

"Never mind. I'm sure I don't want to hear that. I'm not worried about the money even though I'd appreciate if you tries to control yourself more next time but I shudder to think how our reputation could have suffered when my son went on some insane shopping spree... I expect you to be here in four hours. Do make sure that you are presentable enough to pass for a Malfoy."

With that he was gone. Lucius massaged his temples again. Then he notices Rodolphus standing in the doorway.

"30 000?" he asked

"Look at it this way. At least we know we had fun yesterday."

"True enough. But right now I believe we both need a shower. Desperately."

IIIIIIIIII

Elsewhere Harry took a piece of parchment and started writing

*Last will and testament of Peter Pettigrew*

*If this will is open than it means that I am dead and I don't doubt that I'll meet my end in a battle. I imagine that for everyone in the room it was a great shock to discover my face under the Death Eater mask...*

*. . . I'm sorry James, I always loved you . . . or more specifically your stag form. Looked like the goat I lost my . . .*

*. . . and so I leave everything to the new student Harry Amin Notharry, I know it's not much, and I know that I don't have any connection to Mr. Notharry. But I know that none of my real friends would want anything that came from a dirty traitor like me.*

*Signed,*

*Peter*

*Pettigrew*

Harry finished with a smile of satisfaction, wouldn't Hermione be happy to see that he was being proactive in taking care of his work now rather than later. Or . . . or would Hermione be unhappy that he was foraging several documents. Hmmm . . . perhaps it all evened out? No matter, Harry dismissed the thought. He had work to do and things to prepare for.

"I still think you have a better pair than I do Trixie." Harry's pondering were interrupted by the arrival of a pair of rather attractive sisters.



"But I just love your hair Cissy," Trixie protested. "You really are prettier than I am."

"Why don't we just agree that we're both gorgeous?" Cissy suggested.

Ignoring their mindless banter, Harry contemplated the Black sisters. On the one hand they were both smoking hot . . . on the other they were both really evil. Hmmm, Harry hummed to himself, "they haven't done anything yet and they they are both smoking hot so . . . I'll take them both as my concubines." His mind made up, there was only one thing more for him to do. "Hmmm." Harry began to write. "Last will and Testament of Lucius Malfoy . . ."

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"Mister Notharry," McGonagall hissed. "You wouldn't happen to know anything about those reductos that happened to hit Mr. Malfoy and Mr. Lestranger in the back of the head would you?"

"Who me?" Butter wouldn't melt in his mouth, "I don't know anything about it. I will say that both of them were looking rather depressed."

"Do you expect me to believe that they both committed suicide?" McGonagall asked with a raised eyebrow, "by reductioning themselves in the backs of the head after tying their hands behind their backs and snapping their own wands?"

"Man," Harry's eyes widened in awe. "Those guys must have been really smart to figure out how to do all that."

"And you just happened to start dating both of their betrothed only moments after their unfortunate deaths?" Minerva couldn't believe this kid could keep a straight face.

"They needed comforting," Harry explained. "What kind of person would I be if I turned away two girls whose beloveds had just killed themselves."

"I thought you said you didn't know anything about it," McGonagall smirked. She had him now.

"I didn't," Harry shook his head. "The two girls came to me because they suspected that Malfoy and Lestrange were . . . more interested in the company of each other than they were in together than the company of the lovely Black sisters."

"So you're saying that they committed lover's suicide?" Minerva had to hand it to him, he could really spin a yarn.

"It all makes so much sense," Harry nodded. "I can't believe I never thought of it, wow you're really smart Professor."

AN: I am quite aware of what Dumbledore's password means, you need not leave a review telling me. Thanks go to luinlothana for one of the scenes above.

OMAKE: Lilly finds out that Notharry is Harry who is her son . . .

"Damn you James," Lilly screamed. "I can't believe you did that."

"But Lills," James protested. "I needed to . . ."

"I don't want to hear it." Lilly brought her knee up into Sirius's groin. "You do something like this again." Lilly's knee rose again. "And Sirius will never be able to have children again."

"Not that I'm complaining mind you," James said slowly. "But why are you hitting Sirius?"

"You think I'd abuse my future baby?" Lilly asked in shock. "Take this Sirius."

The below Omake goes with the last story 'Death of a Hero.'

Omake – The Public Reacts

The alley seemed unnaturally silent to Tom as he went out to fetch the morning papers. "What's going on?" He called out to one of the passers by.

"It's Harry Potter," the woman sobbed. "He's . . . he's dead."

"What?" Tom asked in shock. "No . . . it . . . he's just a boy."

"Here." Woman thrust a copy of the Quibbler into his hand. "It's all here."

"It can't be true," Tom said dully. "It just can't."

"The Lovegoods wouldn't lie about something like this," the woman insisted. "Not something like this."

So engrossed was he in the story, Tom didn't remember walking back to the Cauldron or taking his place behind the bar.

"Did you hear?" One of the early morning customers shocked the old man out of his stupor.

"Alone and without a wand," Tom said. "It still took twelve of them to bring him down."

"They say he refused to let them take him alive," one of the other shopkeepers said mournfully. "They say that he's the one that started the fire."

"This can't be," another moaned. "Who will save us now?"

"If one boy can take ten of them then we can take the rest," Tom said firmly. "Remember Harry Potter."

"Remember Harry Potter," several of the people echoed. An oppressive silence hung over the bar for several seconds until another woman spoke.

"Quibbler got a few details wrong," the woman said sadly. "My brother in law works for the Ministry, he said that they found three bodies that belonged to his relatives. Five more that belonged to known or suspected death eaters, and twelve more that they couldn't identify. Voldemort must have sent as many as he could find and Harry . . ." the woman sobbed. "How could we have believed . . . we can never." The woman dissolved into tears.

"No we can't," Tom agreed. "We can never make amends for what we allowed ourselves to believe."

The Enforcer

"Have a seat Amelia," Fudge said with a condescending smile.

"What can I do for you Minister?" Madame Bones asked neutrally.

"This request I just received from your office." Fudge waved a paper. "I'm afraid it's impossible, members of my personal staff are above suspicion and I will not allow your department to question them."

"What request?" Bones asked with a frown. "May I see that?"

"Fine." Fudge threw the paper at her and sulked, this conversation wasn't going the way he'd rehearsed it and it was depressing him.

"Ah," Bones said in understanding. "I see the problem, this wasn't a request."

"It wasn't?"

"It was a notification that your staff was now allowed to leave the building until they were vetted," Amelia explained.

"You . . . you can't do this," Fudge sputtered. "I'm the Minister."

"I'm not doing it," Bones said sweetly. "One of my Chief Inspectors is."

"Then tell him to stop," Fudge demanded.

"I can't."

"I realise that telling a man to do something may be difficult for you," Fudge began arrogantly. "One of the reasons that I opposed having a woman put in your position. But you're going to have to learn . . ."

"That's not it," Bones said with a cold smile. "If I tell him that then he will resign."

"Then let him resign."

"And if he resigns then I loose what little control I have over him," Amelia continued. "You've heard of Dirty Harry haven't you?"

"The killer?" Fudge asked nervously. "Where did you get him?"

"If he were to resign then I might not be able to keep him pointed at death eaters." She ignored the question. "I know he isn't too fond of you for instance."

"Can't you have him arrested?" Fudge demanded.

"Most of the Aurors fear him more then they fear Voldemort," Bones replied. "And at the moment, he hasn't broken any of the larger laws."

"Never mind," Fudge said quickly. "But why do you have a sadist like that in your department? I though Aurors were screened better then that."

"He may be a rabid dog," Bones said with a grin. "But he's my rabid dog. Like I said, I have a little control so long as he continues working for me."

"Carry on," Fudge said quickly.

"One more thing before I leave," Bones said. "I notice you haven't had any of your tea."

"What of it?"

"You may wish to have some of it," Bones said. "And one of those cakes too."

"Just get out," Fudge growled.

"Yes Minister," Bones agreed. At least she'd given him the chance to have his last meal.

Fudge waited until Bones left his office before throwing his temper tantrum. "Deloris," Fudge screamed. "Deloris come in here."

"She can't hear you," a man said as he walked through the door.

"Why . . . Potter?" Fudge said in shock. "What are you doing here?"

"Just wanted to ask you a couple questions," Harry replied.

"I don't have time for that," Fudge sneered.

"You don't have a choice," Harry replied. "Shack, Tonks, dose him."

"Yes sir," Kingsley replied dully. "I'm sorry about this Minister." The Aurors pried open the surprised Minister's mouth and forced him to swallow a bit of potion.

"Now then," Harry began with a smile. "Are you a death eater?"

"No."

"Have you ever knowingly provided support to death eaters?" Harry tried again.

"Yes," Fudge agreed.

"That's all I needed," Harry said. "Give him the counter agent."

"Pwatter ouu." Fudge worked his jaw. "You've gone too far," the Minister sneered. "I'll see you kissed for this."

"You just admitted to treason," Harry replied with a shrug. "I think the court will be willing to over look any irregularities in my account of what happened in light of that."

"Damn you," the Minister went for his wand.

"NO," Tonks seized the man's hand. "You can't kill him."

"Curse you," Fudge spat at the woman. "Curse you."

"I just saved your life fool," Tonks hissed. "He wanted you to draw, if you draw then he can kill you in self defence."

"True," Harry agreed. "Put him in the holding cells," Harry ordered. "I have an appointment with a few members of the Wizengomet after this so hurry up."

"Yes sir," Tonks agreed.

"On second thought," Harry began. "Why don't you two find out what he knows and build the case," Harry said. "Have Bones send up two more assistants for me."

"Yes sir," Tonks agreed with considerably more enthusiasm.

AN: Didn't want to just toss up the Omake so I jotted out the above.

Omake: Dirty Harry - Reactions from the Peanut Gallery

"Albus," Minerva said in exasperation. "You can't say you're not concerned about this."

"It's normal for teenage boys to go through stages of rebellion," Dumbledore agreed. "I'm sure he'll be back to normal soon."

"Rebellion yes, murder no.

Omake: Death of a Hero – The Public Reacts

The alley seemed unnaturally silent to Tom as he went out to fetch the morning papers. "What's going on?" He called out to one of the passers by.

"It's Harry Potter," the woman sobbed. "He's . . . he's dead."

"What?" Tom asked in shock. "No . . . it . . . he's just a boy."

"Here." Woman thrust a copy of the Quibbler into his hand. "It's all here."

"It can't be true," Tom said dully. "It just can't."

"The Lovegoods wouldn't lie about something like this," the woman insisted. "Not something like this."

So engrossed was he in the story, Tom didn't remember walking back to the Cauldron or taking his place behind the bar.

"Did you hear?" One of the early morning customers shocked the old man out of his stupor.

"Alone and without a wand," Tom said. "It still took twelve of them to bring him down."

"They say he refused to let them take him alive," one of the other shopkeepers said mournfully. "They say that he's the one that started the fire."

"This can't be," another moaned. "Who will save us now?"

"If one boy can take ten of them then we can take the rest," Tom said firmly. "Remember Harry Potter."

"Remember Harry Potter," several of the people echoed. An oppressive silence hung over the bar for several seconds until another woman spoke.

"Quibbler got a few details wrong," the woman said sadly. "My brother in law works for the Ministry, he said that they found three bodies that belonged to his relatives. Five more that belonged to known or suspected death eaters, and twelve more that they couldn't identify. Voldemort must have sent as many as he could find and Harry . . ." the woman sobbed. "How could we have believed . . . we can never." The woman dissolved into tears.

"No we can't," Tom agreed. "We can never make amends for what we allowed ourselves to believe."

AN: Kinsfire took this idea and ran with it, you can find it on kinsfire dot net or fanfiction authors dot net

OMAKE: Harry's Real Parents . . .

"Have a seat Harry," Dumbledore said gently. "I'm afraid that I have some rather . . . disturbing information to share with you."

"What is it sir?"



"Lilly Potter isn't your real mother," Dumbledore said. "We suspect that your green eyes and the fact that blood magic protects you at your aunt's house to be the result of some sort of charm that James cast . . . or possibly a potion."

"Then who is my mother?" Harry demanded.

"We don't know."

"What do you mean you don't know?"

"Severus . . . Severus has just revealed some new information about your parents," Dumbledore began. "Nine months before your birth, James was captured by a group of female death eaters. I hate to be the one to have to break this to you but they . . . they used him."

"Used him?"

"Passed him around like currency," Dumbledore explained. "Nine months later, Lilly gave birth to you never knowing that you weren't her child."

"Uh huh," Harry said flatly. "Did someone spike your lemon drops again?"

"I know this is hard to take in," Dumbledore said. "But you must trust me."

"Fine," Harry agreed. "Whatever."

"And while we've brought the subject up," Dumbledore sighed. "I'm afraid that James Potter isn't your real father."

"What now?"

"While James was a prisoner of the death eaters, I had Hestia Jones looking after Lilly." Dumbledore explained. "I suspect that one thing led to another . . . and well, you were born about nine months later so . . ."

"Let me get this straight," Harry said. "My father was kidnapped by a bunch of female death eaters so you think that one or more of them might be my mother?"

"Yes," Dumbledore agreed.

"And to console my mother," Harry said. "You had Hestia stay with her for the . . . how long was my father held hostage?"

"Three of what must have been the most terrible days of his life," Dumbledore said sadly.

"Hestia is still a woman isn't she?" Harry began. "And always has been."

"That is correct."

"Just to be sure," Harry said. "You don't think it's possible that my parents could have . . . I don't know, gotten together after James got free and produced me?"

"Nope, Hestia and one or more female death eaters are your parents." Dumbledore said firmly.

"Riiight," Harry said slowly. "May I go now Professor?"

"Yes . . . yes, you should go think about this."

"Before I do," Harry replied. "And just to satisfy my curiosity, what would I need to do to have you declared mentally unfit?"

AN: I've seen too many real father for Harry stories and I thought I needed to write this to counter them. Have seen one good one that involved Polyjuice and a vomiting Snape. Don't remember the title, author, or much else. But it was a good fic.

Omake: The Future?

Harry awoke in the hospital wing and looked around with a look of confusion on his face, "how in the hell did I get back here?"

"Harry," Hermione shrieked. "You're awake."

"Hermione?" Harry said in shock. "How the hell are you? It's been what . . . twelve, no almost fifteen years?"

"What are you talking about Harry?" Hermione asked nervously.

"And you look so young," Harry continued. "The years have really been kind to you. Enough of the small talk, why'd you bring me here?"

"Madame Pomfrey," Hermione yelled for the school nurse. "There's something wrong with Harry."

"What is it dear?"

"Good to see you're still alive too," Harry said with a smile. "So again, why'd you bring me here?"

"Because you passed out in the great hall," Hermione replied. "Don't you remember?"

"The great hall?" Harry said slowly. "What year is this?"

"We're in the first week of fifth year," Hermione said. "You know that Harry."

"From my point of view," Harry said slowly. "I graduated more than a decade ago, fourteen years to be exact."

"Then how'd you get here?"

"I was wondering about that," Harry said. "Might be because I was about to die?"

"You were about to die?" Hermine squeaked.

"Care to enlighten us Harry?" Dumbledore asked as he walked into the room. "Forgive my intrusion but when I heard you were awake . . ."

"It's like old home week," Harry said with a smile.

"Get on with the story Mr. Potter," Pomfrey snapped.

"My ship was going down and there wasn't a coast guard vessel in sight," Harry explained. "I was trying to get the life raft over board when a wave swept over the bow and sucked me into the ocean."

"Round the world cruise after you defeated Voldemort?" Dumbledore asked with a twinkle. "I did something similar after . . ."

"Working on a crab boat as a deck hand," Harry interrupted. "Not nearly as bad as it could be when you have pepper up potions and warming charms."

"But why?" Dumbledore seemed to be at a loss for words.

"The money was good and it was . . . well, quiet isn't the right word." Harry frowned as he tried to figure out the right term. "Isolated maybe?"

"I . . ."

"Oh, and I didn't defeat Voldemort." Harry continued. "A team of Aurors under Shacklebolt took him out."

"But the Prophecy," Dumbledore said weakly.

"Yep, turns out you ruined my life for nothing." Harry said with a smile. "I wasn't too happy when I figured that out, but I've had plenty of time to get over it."

"What happened?"

"Voldemort made a mistake when he went after Madame Bones," Harry explained. "She was a well liked leader, came up through the ranks and had no shortage of friends. Shack just sort of snapped, he and his team weeded out all of the death eaters in Magical Law Enforcement and then they rounded up all the known Death Eaters they could find." Harry started laughing. "I still remember the look on your face when they came for Snape, classic."

"So they arrested Severus then?"

"Nah," Harry said. "You managed to protect him like you always do. Not that it did any good in the long run, several Aurors ended up dieing because of it."

"How," Dumbledore gasped. "Don't tell me, Severus . . ."

"Not sure what side he was on," Harry replied. "No, you had him go warn old snake face before the attack. I think you figured that Voldemort would run if he knew there was a large number of Aurors on the way. He didn't and they lost nearly seventy five percent of their forces."

"Seventy five percent," the old man said in horror.

"Course the death eaters lost one hundred percent," Harry said with a shrug. "They weren't in the mood to take prisoners after Shack bought it." Dumbledore looked ill.

"You said you hadn't seen me in fifteen years?" Hermione asked slowly.

"Not since the start of seventh year," Harry agreed.

"What happened?" Hermione asked, dreading the answer.

"We all agreed that it would be safer to stop being friends," Harry replied. "Not that it did the Weasley family any good, only two of them lived to see us graduate."

"Why would I agree to that?" Hermione asked, close to tears.

"Might of been because your parents got tortured to death," Harry replied. "They sent you a pensive showing what they did . . . it wasn't plesant."

"So that's what we all have to look forward to?" Dumbledore asked weakly.

"Who knows," Harry said. "I came back in time so I'd imagine that things have changed."

AN: Just another Harry from the future comes back. This one isn't quite from a dark future or a light future, it's just a possibility.

## The Barry Jumper Show

Two weeks before Harry comes home from school . . .

“Barry, Barry.” Petunia cheered as she watched her favorite show. “Dirty freaks,” she muttered. “You couldn’t pay me enough to drop my dignity and go on that show.”

“Do you have a lazy freeloading out of control teen living with you?” The television asked. “If so, contact the Barry Jumper show. Family with the worst child gets an all expense paid vacation to Aruba while the teen gets sent to Sergeant Hate’s death camp for future criminals.”

“Hmmmm, Aruba.” Petunia grabbed the phone. “Hello, Barry Jumper show? Let me tell you about my nephew . . . yes he lives with us. Well . . .”

Two Days after Harry gets home from school . . .

“Listen here boy,” Vernon growled. “This stupid show is very important to your aunt.”

“I’ll be on my best behavior,” Harry said dully.

“The hell you will,” Vernon shouted. “You’ll be on your worst behavior if you know what’s good for you. Understand me you little freak?”

“Uh . . . o . . . k . . .”

“Good, you remember this conversation and mind what I said.”

“I don’t think I’ll have a problem remembering this,” Harry said dryly.

IIIIIIII

“Barry, Barry.”

“I don’t see how you can watch that drek dad,” Hermione said with a sniff. “It’s just a bunch of idiots showing themselves off on the tele.”

"Bread and circuses hon," he replied. "We've had this conversation before."

"Yes and we agreed that it catered to the lowest common denominator," she replied. "Remember?"

"I just like turning my brain off and relaxing once and a while," he said. He didn't mention that he rarely watched it when his daughter wasn't around, she was so fun to tease.

"I . . . Harry?"

"What?"

"Mum come quick," Hermione shouted. "Harry's on the Barry Jumper show."

"Coming dear," she replied. "What are they doing today?"

"Wild and out of control teens that freeload on their relatives," Hermione's father replied.

IIIIIIII

"Let's start off with young Harry here," Barry announced to the crowd. "So tell me Harry, may I call you Harry?"

"Yes sir."

"What's the worst thing you've ever done?"

"Well," Harry began. "This one time, me and one of my mates missed the train to school."

"That's it?"

"No, so we stole his father's car and drove to school." Harry said proudly. "And crashed it into a tree."

"That's nothing," one of the other teens sneered. "I steal cars all the time and sell them to chop shops."



"I steal cars and sell them for cocaine," Dudley said proudly. "And I kill the owners and hide them in the trunk."

"Be quiet dear," Petunia whispered to her son. "This isn't a competition."

"But I can't let the freak win," Dudley whined.

"Uh . . . right," Barry said with a smile. "Moving right along, tell me about sex. Have you ever had sex Harry?"

"No," Harry said with a blush. "But a girl I know kissed me at the train station."

"That's it?"

"Sorry sir."

"I've got an older boyfriend," one of the other teens boasted.

"Oh yeah, I've got twelve older boyfriends," Dudley interrupted. "And I let them touch me for money so I can buy cocaine and heroin like in that movie."

"Getting back to you Harry," Barry said with an odd look on his face. "Have you ever hurt anyone?"

"Yes," Harry whispered.

"Tell me about it?"

"I got some of my friends hurt," Harry said with a sad look on his face. "I thought my godfather was in danger and we went to go save him."

"Go on."

"But he ended up saving us," Harry sobbed. "And I got him killed."

"I'm sure it isn't your fault Harry," Barry said sympathetically. "Would he want you to kick yourself like this?"

"No."

"I beat a guy until he went into a coma," one of the other teens offered.

"Oh yeah, I kill people all the time," Dudley said quickly. "Then I go to the cemetery and dig up their bodies so I can rob them and have sex with them."

"Damn it," Vernon screamed. "Ask that little freak about magic, he can do magic."

"Magic?" Barry asked with a laugh. "Are you in some sort of cult Harry?"

"No sir."

"He's a wizard," Vernon screamed. "He goes to a school for wizards and he can do magic. Ask him."

"Can you do magic Harry?" Barry asked with an amused grin.

"Um." Harry fished around in his pockets for a few seconds. "Watch the coin." What followed was one of the worst attempts at slight of hand in recent memory. "Ta da . . . I'm sorry it wasn't very good but I still need a lot of practice."

"That's ok Harry," Barry said with a smile. "I'm sure you did your best."

"Not like that," Vernon screamed. "Tell him to turn it into gold or something."

"You can't turn things into gold can you Harry?"

"No sir, I wouldn't even know how to begin."

"You see Mr. Dursley, young Harry can't turn things into gold."

"Die you lying freak," Vernon shouted as he tried to brain Harry with a chair.

"Security," Barry called out. The audience cheered as several burley guards beat Vernon with very large clubs. "Harry, I don't think you're

safe with those people so here's what we're going to do. We're going to pay to have you take a small vacation to Aruba while the police investigate your relatives."

"Thank you sir."

"BARRY, BARRY, BARRY." The audience cheered as the show ended.

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"Daddy," Hermione said sweetly. "Could I borrow your credit card for a sec?"

"Why?"

"Uh . . . to get your birthday present."

"My birthday present wouldn't happen to be you going to Aruba would it?" He asked suspiciously.

"No," Hermione replied quickly. "Of course not."

"Then would it be something that you have to go to Aruba to pick up?"

"Maybe."

"Just give it to her," his wife sighed. "Though I don't understand why you can't just get some magical way that will take half the time and cost almost nothing."

"Uh . . . about that," Hermione said nervously.

"How much?"

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"Madame Bones," Random Auror #3 began. "There's something I need to bring to your attention."

"What is it?"

"There was a deliberate attempt to violate the Staute of Secrecy," the Auror replied.

"WHAT?"

"Fortunately Harry Potter was on hand and made the man look like a laughing stock, the muggles are convinced that the man is insane and everything worked out."

AN: Just another Omake . . .

Omake: More of Dirty Harry

Arthur took a deep breath to steady his nerves before opening the door. "Molly . . . Molly, I . . ."

"Arthur thank god," Molly sobbed as she threw herself into his arms. "Thank god you're alive."

"Of course I am dear," Arthur tried to comfort his wife.

"When I heard," the woman began in a shaky voice. "When I heard about what was happening in the Ministry . . . thank god you escaped. We have to get to Dumbledore."

"Escaped?" Arthur said in shock. "What are you talking about?"

"You haven't heard? Bones brought in a mad man, he's killing everyone that he even suspects might be disloyal to the Minister." Her eyes widened in horror. "Percy . . . you don't suppose he'll get caught up in all this do you."

"Percy is fine," Arthur said quickly. "And the rumors are exaggerated, Bones's man . . . he isn't killing people who are disloyal to the Minister. He's . . . well." Arthur paused to in a vain attempt to think of a positive spin to put on the situation. "He's only going after the Death Eaters, it seems that our former Minister let quite a few of them into critical positions."

"Only Death Eaters?" Molly said in relief. "Arthur I was so worried, but I guess things aren't so bad. And with things safer now that all the

Death Eaters are out of the Ministry, do you think Professor Dumbledore will allow Harry to stay with us this summer?"

## Harry Potter and The Summer of Drunken Debauchery

Harry was sitting in his room staring dully at the wall when a strange owl swooped in and delivered a letter. Harry's throat developed a large lump when he read the front and realised that it was from his newly expired godfather.

*Dear Harry,*

*If you are reading this then I am dead, probably in the Department of Mysteries. At a guess I was killed some time between three and five in the afternoon by my cousin Bellatrix (You know, Draco's aunt, one of the people that tortured your friend's parents into insanity?) As I was saying, I'd guess that I wasn't paying attention and she hit me with some sort of spell, I don't think she'd have used a lethal spell which is strange because she doesn't normally show restraint but I digress. After being hit by this spell, I'll bet I fell down a staircase or into some sort of veil that kills people and now I'm dead. Harry, I just want to tell you that it's not your fault. I had a feeling that you'd be blaming yourself for my death, which may have happened because the Voldemort tricked you somewhere and I had to come to the rescue, if that's what happened then it's not your fault and you need to quit moping. Now if you're anything like James then you're entertaining thoughts of escape, and I want to be serious and not Sirius for a minute. You can't escape, I know how easy it would be to wait till Dung took his shift at noon today (in fifteen minutes from the time you're reading this part) I know that all you have to do is wait till he gets drunk and passes out, (five minutes after his shift starts) which you'll confirm by listening for snores. I know that you realise that you can remove the underage detection charms on your wand by waving it three times, ending with a flick, and saying the incantation 'Whatever, I do magic when I want, screw you hippie.' And that you could then remove the tracking charms that were placed on virtually everything you own by saying, *Badus Latatinus Spellus endus*. I know that you're too smart to do this and that instead you'd choose to transfer them to something else such as your bed using the incantation, '*transfurus orus somethingus*.' I realise that you would then walk down the street to the third house on the left, the yellow one with red flowers in the front where you would lift up a brick in the garden (the one with a five scratched into it) to find a small key that*

*happens to be a portkey to a secret location. And I'm sure that you don't expect to find an unplotable location where you'll join me, realising that I faked my own death and then sent this letter. I know all this because you're too bright to try to leave the cess pool of a prison that Dumbledore has exiled you to.*

*Your 'Very dead, don't think otherwise' Godfather*

*Sirius (Faked my Death) Black.*

Harry blinked, once, twice, three times. Then he got to packing, he had a portkey to not get and a godfather to not get reunited with.

Sneaking out of his house and past the sleeping 'guard,' Harry retrieved the portkey and allowed it to take him to meet his godfather.

"Sirius?" Harry asked hopefully.

"FOOLISH BOY," a deep voice bellowed. "It is I Voldemort, time to die."

"Voldemort's voice is a bit more high pitched then that," Harry critiqued. "Try removing your testicles before speaking next time."

"So you're saying that Voldemort is evil because he's got no bollocks at all?"

"Maybe." Harry shrugged.

"Snape has got only one ball."

"The other one's in Albert Hall," Harry added the next line.

"Dumbledore's got balls but very small."

"And Voldemort's got no balls at all."

"Got I missed you Harry," Sirius said. "Shame you didn't get a chance to grow up with the others."

"Yeah, I wish I could have met my parents."

"Parents?" Sirius asked in shock. "I'm talking about the Marauders. You'd have been a great prankster."

"Let me recap some of the major events in my life," Harry said slowly. "I burned a Professor to death with my hands in my first year. Discovered a secret chamber that you never found in my second, and killed a giant snake. Saved your life in my third. Won the . . ."

"But think how much better you'd be if you grew up around the rest of us," Sirius interrupted.

"Whatever, what do we do about the Order?"

"To hell with them."

"We gotta tell them something," Harry protested.

"Write 'em a letter," Sirius suggested. "To throw them off our tail."

"Got a pen?"

"Here you go."

"Dear Order." Harry wrote. "I have come to accept that Sirius did not fake his own death and is in fact dead. Because of this, I have chosen to go train or something because I know that I must face Voldemort. Or possibly because I want revenge. Any way, I'll be in some remote location, possibly the Chamber of Secrets. Anyway, to reiterate: Sirius dead, I've accepted it, in the Chamber or something, don't bother looking for me."

"Brilliant," Sirius cheered. "They'll never suspect a thing."

"You really think they're that dumb?"

"Yes Harry, yes I do."

"Good enough for me, where are we going?"

"To the happiest place on earth Harry," Sirius said enthusiastically. "Mexico."



"Got a portkey?"

"You know it," Sirius agreed.

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"Harry's missing?" Dumbledore asked slowly.

"I was only asleep for a minute," Dung muttered.

"Guess that explains the letter I just got," Dumbledore said thoughtfully. "Not to worry, I have information leading me to believe that Harry has accepted Sirius's death and is currently training in some remote location . . . possibly the Chamber of Secrets."

"By jove Headmaster, you've done it again."

"I have, haven't I?"

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"So now that we're in Mexico," Harry began. "What do we do now."

"Find a bar and get drunk," Sirius replied. "And maybe find a girl or two."

"Oh . . . what about that one?"

"The Cartel," Sirius read the sign. "Let's drink here, looks like a nice place to have a cold one."

"Sure," Harry agreed. "I really like those fake machine guns all the waiters have."

"Really adds to the atmosphere," Sirius agreed.

"What can I get for you gentlemen?" One of the 'waiters' asked.

"Tequila," Sirius said quickly. "To start with anyway."

"I thought we were going to have a beer," Harry spoke up.

"That's right," Sirius said with a nod. "And a beer for each of us."

"Right away sir."

"Classy place," Sirius said in a tone of wonder. "Look, everyone else is in a suit."

"I really like the fact that everyone is keeping the volume down," Harry said. "It's really considerate."

"Your drinks sirs."

"Thanks mac," Sirius said. "Now Harry, the thing about drinking tequila is . . . what's wrong?"

"There's a worm in my tequila," Harry said.

"Congratulations Harry," Sirius cheered. "You usually have to drink a whole bottle before you get one of those. Drink up."

"But the worm."

"Is to be eaten for good luck," Sirius sighed. "Chase it with the beer."

"I don't . . ."

"On three," Sirius growled. "One-

"-Two."

"Three," Sirius said and tossed back his drink. "That's it Harry, get that worm down. Now the beer . . . chug chug chug."

"God," Harry gasped. "I did it."

"Waiter," Sirius called out. "More drinks."

"What would you like sir?"

"Whatever you have that will peel paint," Sirius replied. "My godson is drinking for the first time."

"I understand," the man said. "Would sir care for some ever clear?"

"Sir would," Sirius agreed. "Bring it on."

"What's ever clear?" Harry asked innocently.

"A bottle full of fun," Sirius replied. "And it'll kill you if you drink more than a sip or two."

"Kill me?" Harry choked. "You expect me to drink that?"

"Unless you're a girl," Sirius agreed.

"But it'll kill me."

"Maybe we should change your name to Harriet," Sirius mused. "Get you a dress."

"Do you want me dead?"

"Better dead than a wuss," Sirius agreed. "Unless . . ."

"Unless what?"

"Ever heard of fire breathing?" Sirius asked.

"Yeah why?"

"Try it," Sirius said. "It's easy, just get a mouth full of ever clear and blow it into the candle."

"There has to be more to it than that."

"If you don't blow hard enough the flame travels back into your mouth and blows up your head," Sirius said. "It's a Marauder tradition to do it before starting a summer of drunken revelry, even Peter learned how to do it."

"I don't know . . ."

"You don't want to be less cool than Peter do you?"

"I'll do it," Harry agreed. Harry took a deep breath and a mouth full of alcohol and spat it through the wall of candles. To his surprise, a large sheet of flame shot out of his mouth . . . and onto the neighboring table. Setting it and the people sitting around it on fire. Men screamed and the 'waiters' around each table began firing at each other until finally, Sirius and Harry were the only living things in the burning bar.

"Good going Harry," Sirius groaned. "Now we're going to have to find somewhere else to drink."

"Did that ever happen when you breathed fire?" Harry asked in shock.

"You kidding? I never did something as stupid as try to breathe fire."

"But you said . . ."

"I say a lot of things," Sirius interrupted. "Now let's get out of here before the cops arrive."

"Too late," Harry said weakly.

IIIIIIIIII

"It seems that I was mistaken when I believed Harry to be in the Chamber of Secrets," Dumbledore said slowly. "And it seems that we were all mistaken when we believed that Sirius was killed in the Department of Mysteries."

"What?" Remus asked hopefully. "Sirius is alive?"

"So it seems," Dumbledore agreed. "I just received a picture of what appears to be Sirius's genitalia and on the back of it is a small note."

"What's it say?" Remus demanded.

"Dear suckers, screw you all. Me and Harry are having fun . . . oh, and tell Snape that I dipped my balls in his fire whiskey."

"What?" Snape screamed.

"And tell Snape that I dipped my balls in his fire whiskey," Dumbledore repeated.

"Ptthh," Snape spat out his drink. "Damn you Black."

"Sirius is alive," Remus said hopefully.

"Unfortunately," Snape said as he gargled.

"Oh and I urinated in that water," Remus said absently. "As sort of a last tribute to Sirius, he'd have wanted me to befoul your water."

"Damn you too," Snape screeched.

IIIIIIII

"The Frito Bandito?" Sirius asked dryly.

"It was the only thing I could think of," Harry tried to defend himself. "And who are you to talk Mister Fister?"

"I don't do well under pressure," Sirius whined. "You know that."

"At least we didn't give our real names," Harry sighed. "All we have to do now is bribe or escape our way out and we'll be home free."

"About that . . ."

"What is it?"

"I sort of . . . used it to get us these new tattoos."

"What . . . I've got a tattoo," Harry said in shock as he stared down at his arm.

"Cool huh?"

"Awesome," Harry cheered. "I look bad ass."

"We look bad ass," Sirius corrected. "Wait here, I'm going to try to score some smokes."

"Sure Sirius," Harry agreed. Harry watched as his godfather walked over to speak with their cell mates . . . and his sensitive ears picked up some crucial bits of the conversation.

"No luck," Sirius said as he walked back. "None of them speak any English . . . barbarians. Don't they know enough to learn English so that they can communicate with me if I should grace their pathetic country with my presence?"

"Oh . . ."

"Bastards."

"Sirius?"

"Yeah Harry?"

"Is it considered acceptable for godfathers to sell their godsons for cigarettes in the wizarding world?"

"No, in fact it's expressly forbidden by the godfather godson . . . uh . . . thingy."

"Oh . . . then why did you go over to that group of men and offer to sell me for cigarettes?"

"We're not in the wizarding world right now Harry," Sirius protested. "We're in a Mexican jail cell . . . the rules are different here."

"Then you're not my godfather anymore."

"What?" Sirius asked in shock. "Why not?"

"You tried to sell me for cigarettes."

"So?"

"That's not the sort of thing I can forgive," Harry replied. "How would you feel if I tried to sell you for cigarettes?"

"But you don't smoke."

"Suppose I did."

"I'm sure I'd be fine with it," Sirius said. "Why?"

"Cause that guy's been eyeing you," Harry explained. "And I thought it might be fun to take up smoking."

"What if I promised not to sell you for cigarettes?" Sirius suggested.

"Or anything else?"

"Or anything else," Sirius agreed. "Deal?"

"Deal."

"So how are we going to get out of here?"

"Well . . . I do have that emergency Portkey."

"Why haven't we used it already?"

"Didn't want to stop enjoying Mexico," Sirius replied. "All we've done is burn down a bar and kill several people accidentally. There's still lots of fun things to do in Mexico."

"Like what?"

"Drink."

"Let's move on," Harry said. "We can drink somewhere else."

"But I wanna drink here."

"Only thing to drink here is the water."

"Good thinking Harry, we can get beer in the next country. Now grab onto my shirt and away we go."

The Portkey whisked them out of the cell to the amazement of their fellow inmates.

"Where are we now Sirius?"

"The happiest place on earth Harry," Sirius replied. "Bangkok."

"Bangkok?"

"Yep, taxi."

"Were to?"

"Anywhere we can get drunk," Sirius replied.

"You like Russian ladies?"

"Why yes, yes we do."

"Here." The cab driver handed Sirius a full color brochure.

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"Harry?" Hermione gasped. She and her family were vacationing in Mexico and a wanted poster had drawn her eye as she walked down the street. "Wanted for . . . multiple counts of murder? Dangerous assassin? Frito Bandito?"

"What's wrong hon?" Her mother asked. "That looks like your friend Harry."

"It couldn't be," Hermione said slowly. "It . . . just couldn't."

"I'm sure it's not, he's probably safe in England right now."

"Yeah."

"And there's no way he's dumb enough to use an alias like 'Frito Bandito.'"

"Oh god, I've got to find him."

"Hon . . . hon."

|||||



"Why aren't you cheering Harry?" Sirius demanded. "There are women taking off their clothes on the stage. And since this is a third world country, we can . . . you know . . . with them later."

"Something seems off about them," Harry said. "I can't quite put my finger on it, but there's definitely something wrong with them."

"What are you a poofster?" Sirius demanded. "No godson of mine won't get aroused by the sight of a beautiful woman taking off her clothes."

"Uh . . . she . . . he . . . whatever, just took off her panties." Harry said sickly.

"Yeah baby," Sirius cheered as he turned around. "I . . . that's not supposed to be there."

"It's not a woman, it's a man." Harry said sickly. "What kind of bar did you take me to?"

"I didn't know," Sirius protested.

"And you wanted to sleep with it," Harry continued.

"I said I didn't know."

"Sure you didn't . . . poof."

"What?"

"Something you wanted to tell me Sirius?" Harry asked. "Like about why you and Remus spend so much time around each other?"

"Shut up and finish your drink," Sirius growled.

"I'll still accept you if you're gay," Harry said. "Won't go to anymore bars with you but I'll still accept you as my godfather."

"Shut up Harry."

"I guess that's why you were going to sell me to those guys in prison, you wanted to watch."

"I said shut up Harry."

"And it explains why you and Snape are always arguing though," Harry mused. "Unresolved sexual tension."

"God damn it Harry, if you don't shut up then I'll have to hurt you severely."

"My drink is finished," Harry said. "Shall we go or do you want to stay and catch up with me later?"

AN: Wrote a bit more of Harry Potter and the Summer of Drunken Debauchery. Not sure how much more of this I'll write. Yes the first part was posted as an Omake in Odd Ideas.

Omake:

"Sirius," Harry whispered to his godfather.

"What do you need Harry?"

"I've got a problem."

"What is it?"

"It . . . it burns when I pee."

"Those two girls you disappeared with the other night?"

"I think so."

"Harry," Sirius said with tears flowing down his face. "I'm so proud of you."

"What'll I do?"

"We'll get you something to clear that up later," Sirius said with a wave of dismissal. "Right now we have to celebrate."

"Celebrate what?"

"Your first STD," Sirius replied. "I got my first when I was about your age . . . from Fudge's sister . . . good times."

Shamrock

"What is it?" Petunia demanded. She didn't like the looks of the woman on her doorstep. It wasn't anything she could put her finger on, but there was something . . . freakish about the woman.

"Does a young boy named Harry Potter live here?" The woman demanded.

"I don't see how that's any of your . . ."

"Yes or no?" The woman snapped.

"Yes."

"Is he turning nine tomorrow?"

"Yes."

"What is he doing here?" The woman asked. "Our records show that he should have been placed with his godfather Sirius Black?"

"What records?" Petunia asked hesitantly.

"You are aware that his mother registered his birth at the consulate are you not?"

"The consulate . . . . I'll have none of that," Petunia said harshly. "We're loyal subjects of the queen in this house. I've renounced my citizenship, now be off."

"You may have given up yours," the woman said. "But Harry is still an Irish national and as such . . ."

"I renounce it," Petunia said harshly. "Now get out."

"You can't," the woman countered. "Now as I was saying. As an Irish national, Harry is eligible for admission to the Scoil ar Draíocht."

"Draíocht?" Petunia said slowly, the half forgotten lessons her mother had given on the mother tongue provided the answer. "You're one of them," she accused. "How dare you come into my house you freak."

"Take me to Harry Potter now." The woman's wand appeared in her hand.

"You . . . you can't," Petuna stammered as she fell back.

"Try me."

"In the cupboard under the stairs," Petunia broke. Her eyes remained fixed on the tip of the woman's wand."

"Dul a chodlah," the woman incanted. She watched with a satisfied smile as Petunia slumped to the ground. With a sigh, she approached the cupboard and opened the door. "Harry . . . are you there?"

"Who are you?" The dirty young boy asked with a shiver.

"My name is Aingeal Murchadha," the woman said gently. "Would you like me to take you away from here?"

"Yes," Harry said hopefully. "I would like that very much."

"Then take my hand." Harry reached up and grabbed the woman's hand as tightly as his little hands would allow and they disappeared with a pop, hopefully never to return.

Back in Albus Dumbledore's office, a small instrument began spinning wildly. It is quite unfortunate that the Headmaster was not around to see it.

"Where are we?" Harry asked. They had arrived in a large clover field. "How'd we get here?"

"Back in your native land," the woman replied with a smile. She bent down and picked one of the clovers. "And look what I've got for 'ye, a four leaf clover. Make your own luck and you won't need it. But it's also better to have something and not need it, then to need something and not have it." She threaded it through one of his button holes. "Now come with me Harry, we have things to do and not much time to do it in."

"How'd we get here?" Harry repeated.

"Magic," the woman said with a smile. "Your father was a wizard and your mother a witch like I am."

"Can I learn?" Harry asked eagerly.

"Indeed you can," she replied. "If you like."

"I do."

"Then we shall enroll you in the Scoil ar Draíocht right away, or you can wait another two years and go to Hogwarts if you like."

"I don't want to wait," Harry said firmly.

"Not many do," the woman laughed. "One of the reasons that our school starts two years early."

"What's the other?"

"Other what?"

"Reason."

"Ah, it gives our students two years on their rivals to the north. Take any advantage you can if the stakes are high enough. Take any moral advantage if they are not, two more years of study is a very moral choice don't you think."

"Yeah," Harry agreed.

"As you have no parents and we can not find your godfather, you have been declared a ward of the state. Is there anyone you'd like us to contact for you?"

"No . . . no one cares about me," Harry said sadly.

"That's not true Harry," Aingeal said softly. "Your country cares, it cared enough to send me to get you. You're Irish Harry, we always look after our own. It took us nine years to learn that you were in trouble and I am deeply sorry for the delay."

"That's ok," Harry said softly.

"It is not ok," the woman disagreed. "It is inexcusable that we did not know to check on you before now, but we know now and we shall never make that mistake again."

"Thank you," Harry said softly.

"Come with me," the woman said to break the uncomfortable silence. "We still have to get your school supplies."

"I don't . . . I don't have any money."

"As a ward of the state, you don't need any. The government will take care of you as if you were it's child."

"So . . . does that mean it's my parents?" Harry asked slowly.

"I suppose that you could see things that way," the woman agreed.

"Parents," the boy whispered the word as if it were the most precious thing in the world. "Let's go." The woman took Harry by the hand and led him across the field and onto a country road.

"The British may have their Knight bus," she began. "But we have our own ways of getting around."

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Dumbledore returned to his office and paused for a second, something seemed . . . off about the office. He looked around and his first sweep did not turn up anything amiss or signs that someone had entered without his permission. Shrugging the matter off, he turned to his long overlooked paperwork. After all it wasn't like there was anything important he needed to do.

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"Where are we now?" Harry asked. They were in front of a small stone cottage surrounded by a stone wall.

"We're at a wand carver's house," Aingeal replied. "Everything else you need can be purchased at the school."

"I get my own wand?"

"Your very own." She raised her hand and gave a sharp rap on the door.

"What're ya needing?" A young woman asked as she opened the door.

"This is Harry, the young boy I told you about."

"So you'll be needing a wand then?" The strange woman asked. "Try this one. Yew with a unicorn hair." Harry took the wand and shot his savior a confused look.

"Wave it," Aingeal advised. Harry shrugged and complied with the woman's instructions.

"Nothing," the wand maker said to herself as she took another wand. "How about this one, oak with a hair of a pooka. . . no huh. How about this, blackthorn with the thread of a banshee's robe." Harry gave the wand another wave and was shocked to see red sparks come out of the end. "Close, very close." The wand maker said with a satisfied smile. "Try this one, yew with a thread from a banshee's robe." Harry gave the wand a wave.

"Nothing happened," He said with a frown.

"Yes. . . not the core then. Blackthorn with a Merrow hair maybe?" Harry gave the wand an experimental wave and nearly dropped it when it left a visible and lasting gash in the air. "That's the stuff, still one thing missing though." The woman's eyes darted around the room until they fixed on the shamrock still looped through Harry's button hole. "Mind if I take this?"

"Sure," Harry stammered. He watched in fascination as the woman took the shamrock and laid it gently on the handle of his new wand. "What are you doing?"

"Inlaying it into the handle," the woman replied absently. "It'll add a bit of focus and give you a bit of luck. Done, take your wand young wizard."



Harry took the wand and gave it a wave. "Nothing happened?"

"Your lucky shamrock is adding enough control to prevent your magic from leaking out the tip," the wand maker explained. "Try it again but this time, want it to show you something." Harry waved his wand again and this time he produced a faint flower that faded out of existence after a few seconds. "Very nice and welcome home lad."

"Home?"

"Eire is your home now Harry," Aingeal said gently. "And your wand proves it. Only a native son would have that combination."

"Home," Harry said again. This time as a statement.

"That's right, home. How much for the wand?"

"Four Florins and two Scillings," the wand maker replied.

Aingeal dug around in her purse for a few seconds and handed over the coins. "I'll also be needing a jar of polish, a case, and a holster."

"They come with the wand, would you like me to wrap everything up?"

"Please."

AN: Lilly is an Irish name and I'm not sure I've seen this story line before. Lilly and Petunia have an Irish mother and their births were registered with the Irish government. Lilly registered Harry and Petunia renounced her citizenship. The Irish consulate or maybe some sort of magical item at the magic school alerted them to Harry's treatment and they investigated. Dorothy McComb is the only one I can think of that had her (non-Brit) school start a few years earlier than Hogwarts, kudos to her for that. My Gaelic is all based on the internet. My attempts to learn it as a child did not end well. Suppose I'll have to think up an Irish counterpart to the Knight Bus if I ever get around to writing this.

dul a chodlah – go to sleep

Scoil ar Draíocht – school of magic

Potaire – Potter also means Drunkard and thus ends the idea of giving Harry a nice Gaelic name.

ardmháistir – Headmaster

A few Omake: Some loose scenes for the above. I'll incorporate them if I ever get around to writing more of this.

His first friend . . .

"Hello." A small girl in a red hat with a slightly greenish cast regarded Harry with undisguised curiosity. "My name is Colleen O'Connell."

"Harry Potter," Harry said in a low voice.

"Wanna be friends Harry?" The girl asked brightly.

"Ok," Harry agreed.

"Are you the first wizard in your family?" Colleen asked. "I'm the first witch but ma was a Merrow so I guess that's where it comes from."

"I think my parents were magical," Harry ventured.

"So we're both starting out on the same foot then," the girl said confidently.

Exchange . . .

"But surely ardmháistir you realise that the boy must go to Hogwarts," Dumbledore said in frustration. Didn't these people realise what was at stake.

"I'm not sure I do Mr. Dumbledore."

"There is no other place in the world that he can get an education of comparable quality." Dumbledore didn't notice the way the man's fist tightened around his pipe. "And it's inconceivable that any child would turn down the chance to study magic anywhere else if given then choice."

"Why don't we find out then?" Dumbledore's counterpart suggested.

"Find out what?" Albus asked dumbly.

"If any child would study magic anywhere else if given the choice of course," he said with a grin.

"I . . ."

"Hold your comments until after I've had a chance to speak with the boy," The Ardmháistir said sharply. "Send Harry in." The two old men waited in silence until Harry came through the door.

"You sent for me sir?"

"Mr. Dumbledore has a proposal for you Harry and I'd like to get an idea of what you think of it."

"Yes sir," Harry agreed.

"Harry, my name is Albus Dumbledore and I'm here to give you a chance to study at Hogwarts school for witchcraft and wizardry. The oldest and most prestigious wizarding school in all the world."

"Where is it?" Harry asked slowly.

"In Scotland and . . ."

"I'd have to leave Eire?" Harry asked in alarm. "No thank you sir, I'm quite happy where I am."

Diplomatic pressure . . .

"But Harry Potter belongs in the United Kingdom," Dumbledore protested. "The fact that he was taken from his home by agents of your government is nothing less than kidnapping."

"But he wasn't taken from his home Mr. Dumbledore," the ambassador said mildly.

"What?"

"Petunia Dursley did not have legal custody of young Harry, my government was simply caring for one of it's orphans. Something I'll note was approved by the British government beforehand."

"The muggle government maybe but . . . "

"But that's all that matters, unless you can produce the boy's godfather then I'm afraid you must accept the fact that you have no legal ground to stand on. Good day Mr. Dumbledore."

"But Sirius Black is in Azkaban," Dumbledore protested. "As a criminal, he has no legal right to the boy."

"Really?" The ambassador purred. "I haven't found any record of a trial. Without that, Sirius Black is not a criminal. He's a tragic young man your Ministry is holding under duress, perhaps I should file a protest with the International Confederation of Wizards? I'm sure you'll agree that such a blatant abuse of a man's basic rights can't be ignored by a civilized nation after all."

Securing custody . . .

"Sirius look at me," Dumbledore commanded. "How would you like to receive more food, better blankets, and more time away from the dementors?"

"How?" Sirius croaked.

"Just sign this paper," Dumbledore said intently.

"What?" Sirius tried to focus on the document. "Harry?"

"Yes Harry," Dumbledore agreed. "Now sign."

"Why do you want Harry?" Sirius demanded. "What's wrong."

"Sign the bloody paper," Dumbledore said impatiently.

"WHAT'S WRONG WITH HARRY?" Sirius roared. "TELL ME."

"Guard," Dumbledore called out. It was obvious that Black wouldn't cooperate today, perhaps next week.

As Dumbledore left, one thought kept racing through Sirius's brain. Harry was in trouble, he had to get out of this place to save his godson.

## The Road to Hell

Harry leaned back in his bed and sighed for the hundredth time. The muggle Doctors said that he'd never be able to walk again, that the damage was too great. The Order had managed to smuggle in Madame Pomphrey who'd tried to hide her wince while she said that they'd do all they could to fix it. Harry wasn't going to hold his breath, not after watching her conversation with the Headmaster through a cracked door.

It had all started a week earlier when Dudley began learning how to drive. Little pig whined that he couldn't learn properly without getting a new car, as if an older one lacked some sort of quality that would make learning easier. Harry wasn't surprised when his relatives caved after a few minutes of listening to their son . . . Harry would have given the little bastard almost anything in exchange for a few moments of silence.

Grinding his teeth together, Harry remembered his Uncle ordering him to guide his Cousin out of the parking space, he remembered Dudley hitting the accelerator too hard, and he remembered a sharp pain before everything went black. He'd been in the Hospital ever since . . . the accident had been too public to be handled by the Order.

Harry laughed bitterly, who'd have thought that the great Harry Potter would fall to a stupid accident.

"Excuse me." A man walked into Harry's room. "My name is Jonathan Chambers and I think that it would be in your best interests to retain me as your Solicitor in your case against the Dursley family."

"What?" Harry focused on the man.

"You are planning to sue the Dursley family aren't you?" The Solicitor asked sharply.

"Why would I do that?" Harry asked mildly, "they're my relatives aren't they?"

"Your uncle tried to refuse treatment . . . said it was a waste of his taxes." Chambers said quickly. "The Police have already ruled that

what happened was an accident, so a civil suit would be the only way you could get Justice."

"Do tell?" Harry prompted the man, signs of his old personality returning.

"I don't foresee this being a difficult case," Chambers went on, emboldened by Harry's show of interest. "You probably won't even have to face them in open court . . . I'm fairly sure that we could get a large settlement out of the insurance company too."

"How much would this cost me?" Harry asked with a smile.

"I'd be willing to take a percentage of the settlement as my fee," the Lawyer said quickly. "Say . . . ten percent."

"Done," Harry agreed quickly. "What do I need to do?"

"Just sign here," the man said quickly. "I have the paperwork all ready."

"Just a second." Harry spent a few minutes glancing through the paperwork. "Ok."

"Here's my card, call me at any time if you have any questions."

"Thanks," Harry replied. "Could you tell the nurse that I need to speak with her on your way out."

"Certainly," Chambers agreed.

The nurse came in a few minutes later. "You wanted to speak with me?"

"I want my things," Harry said calmly.

"But . . . but you can't leave yet," the nurse protested. "You're still injured."

"Am I going to get any better if I stay here?"

"No but . . ."

"Am I a prisoner here then?" Harry interrupted.

"No you aren't but . . ."

"Then get me my things," Harry continued.

"Fine," the nurse said with a shrug. She walked over to the closet and pulled out a small box, "here's what you had on you when you came in. One small stick and fifteen pence."

"My clothes?"

"Were thrown out," the nurse said with a barely hidden smile. "So I guess you'll have to wait here until you can arrange to get a new set."

Harry waited until the nurse had left before turning his attention to his wand. "Not like things can get any worse," he mused. "What the hell." His mind made up, Harry transfigured his hospital gown into something that would draw less comment and his blankets into a pair of crutches.

Sneaking out of the hospital wasn't difficult, much easier then getting a midnight snack in the Dursley house and Harry felt a rush of elation as he stepped out of one of the side doors and on to the street.

"Need a ride then?" A voice asked from Harry's left.

"Wha . . ."

"I overheard your conversation with the nurse," Chambers explained.

"Thanks," Harry said. "I'd like a ride to the Dursley house and then to London."

"No problem," the Solicitor motioned towards his car.

"So why are you doing this?" Harry asked suddenly.

"Doing what?"

"Working so cheap?" Harry said. "I've heard my uncle go on about how expensive it is to hire a Solicitor."



"Couple reasons," the man replied. "First one is that I haven't been a Solicitor very long. According to most, I shouldn't even be arguing a case until I've done my time as a legal clerk or research assistant for a more established Solicitor or Law Firm."

"Oh . . . you said there were a couple reasons?"

"Two more," the man agreed. "I'll be honest with you, I'm doing this case as much for me as I am for you. I've got a job waiting in my father's law office . . . as a research assistant, I won't be able to argue my own case for several years yet. If I work for you I can do everything for myself . . . the publicity I might get for being a crusading lawyer that cares less about money than he does about justice would just be icing on the cake."

"Oh." Harry looked down at his feet.

"Don't get me wrong, I would like to use the law to help people." The man said quickly. "I just try to be honest about my motivation and any benefits I might receive."

"Thank you," Harry said quietly. "Not many people even make the effort to tell me the truth."

"I'm sorry to hear that," Chambers said tightly. "The truth is a wonderful thing."

"That must be surrounded by a bodyguard of lies?" Harry muttered a half remembered quote from one of his pre-Hogwarts lessons.

"Good to know they still teach you something in school," Chambers said with a laugh. "Cheer up, things are going to get better."

"I'd like to think that," Harry said with a weak grin. "But past experience has taught me not to hope for much."

"Bugger that," Chambers said with a laugh. "Hope for the best but prepare for the worst, don't expect anything."

"Right."

"Buck up lad," Chambers tried to cheer the boy up. "You've got nothing to feel bad about."

"Side from the fact that I'll walk with a limp for the remainder of my life?" Harry asked bitterly.

"What do Doctors know?" Chambers said with a laugh. "If you accept the fact that you'll always have a limp then you'll be right. If you show enough determination then . . ."

"Then I'll walk normally again?"

"Maybe," Chambers said. "Or maybe not, but it's better then giving into despair."

"I guess," Harry sighed.

"Where do you want to go after you stop by the Dursley house?" Chambers asked mildly. "I may be able to arrange something if you don't have any other place to go."

"There's a place in London that I could stay," Harry replied quickly.

"Just be sure I have a way to contact you," Chambers agreed. "Or call me every day to check in."

"I will." They pulled onto Privet Drive a few minutes later and Harry winced when he noticed that his relatives were home. "Maybe it would be a better idea to come back later," Harry suggested.

"Nonsense," Chambers said. "Let me make a quick call and everything will be alright." The Lawyer put his portable phone to his ear and made a quick call.

"What was that about?"

"I've called the police station and requested that they send an constable to observe to insure that you can take your things without being bothered," Chambers replied. "They should have a car here soon." Harry had to suppress a giggle when he saw his uncle storm

out of the house and begin ranting at the police car that pulled into his driveway. "Ready Harry?"

"Ready," Harry confirmed.

"Then let's go," Chambers said as he pulled up to the Dursley house.

"You have a lotta nerve doing this to us you ungrateful welp," Vernon growled at Harry.

"I'd advise you not to respond Harry," Chambers said quickly. "Would you mind staying close constable?"

"Certainly," the constable agreed. "Come on lad, just point out your things and we'll get them loaded into your solicitor's car."

"Yes sir," Harry agreed. It did not take long to gather Harry's few belongings.

"Is this all of it?" Chambers asked in shock.

"Yes sir," Harry agreed. "It's all in the trunk."

"Well then let me help you with this then," the constable said.

"Thank you constable," Chambers replied. "You get the door Harry." They loaded the trunk into Harry's Solicitor's car and made the drive to London. "This the place then?"

"It is," Harry agreed. "Just put me out here and I'll be fine."

"You're sure?"

"I'm sure," Harry confirmed.

"Well . . . take my card, and here's a few coins for the phone if you need me." Chambers said finally. "Call me at any time for any reason." the man wrote a couple numbers on the back of the business card. "On the back is my home number and my father's office number. If you need me I want you to keep trying till you get someone."

"I will," Harry promised.

"Good." The man reluctantly got back into his car and slowly drove away. Harry limped into the Leaky Cauldron and went directly to the bar.

"Hey Tom," Harry began. "I hate to bother you, but could I get some help to bring in my Trunk?"

"Of course," Tom agreed quickly. Harry followed Tom a few paces before the old innkeeper noticed that something was wrong. "Something happen to your leg?"

"I broke it," Harry replied with an attempt at a smile. "That's why I needed the help."

"Have a seat at one of the tables," Tom ordered. "I'll bring in your trunk. Did you need a room too?"

"A room and a meal if it isn't too much trouble," Harry agreed.

"Then have a seat and think of what you'd like," Tom said. "I'll have your trunk stowed and your order taken before you know I was gone."

"Thanks Tom." Harry collapsed into a chair and tried to slow his breathing.

"Decide what you'd like?" Tom asked on his way back to his place at the bar.

"Wouldn't have any warm Pasties would you?" Harry asked hopefully.

"I'll have some in about," Tom glanced at the clock. "Twenty to thirty minutes if you're willing to wait till they get done."

"I'll wait," Harry agreed. "Could I get some chips and something to drink in the mean time?"

"Sure," Tom agreed. "Anything else?"

"Something to read if you've got it," Harry said. "Or something to pass the time any way."

"I'll round up something for you," Tom agreed. "Just give me a minute."

"Thanks Tom," Harry said gratefully. Tom returned a few minutes later with a large box.

"Full of some of the things people have left behind over the years," Tom explained. "Several books and magazines in it. Help yourself to anything you like."

"I will," Harry agreed. Harry rummaged through the box for a few minutes. Most of what he found was nothing special, Quidditch Monthly, Socks Quarterly, etc. He did find something interesting at the bottom of the stack.

"Here are your chips and drink Harry," Tom said as he placed the items on the table. "What are you reading?"

"The Prince," Harry said without looking up. "Thank you Tom."

"No problem Harry," Tom replied. Harry kept reading until his meal arrived. "Here you are Harry."

"Tom, are there solicitors in the wizarding world?"

"Several," Tom agreed. "Did you need one?"

"Yes, I think so."

"I could set up a meeting with mine if you'd like," Tom offered.

"Sure," Harry agreed. "Thanks Tom."

"When would you like to meet with him?"

"As soon as possible," Harry replied.

"I'll get right on that then," Tom said. "Enjoy your meal."

"A prince must have no other objective, no other thought, nor take up any profession but that of war, its methods and its discipline, for that is the only art expected of a ruler." Harry read aloud. "Interesting."

"What was that Harry?"

"Just reading to myself," Harry explained.

"Oh . . . I've set up an appointment with you later today." Tom said.  
"Any time you want was the words he said."

"Where should I go?"

"Here is his card," Tom replied. "Go to the end of the alley and take a left, it's in the big grey building on the second floor."

"Second floor, big grey building." Harry repeated. "I think I've got it."  
He rose to his feet and began limping towards the door.

"Need some help to get there Harry?" Tom asked.

"I'm fine," Harry said through clenched teeth. "Thanks all the same."  
Harry made his way to the Lawyer's office and up the stairs.

"Can I help you?" The receptionist asked in a bored tone.

"Harry Potter," Harry said. "I have an appointment."

"Come right in Mr. Potter," the woman said in a much more friendly tone. "Can I get you anything?"

"A bit of water if it's not too much trouble," Harry agreed.

"Go right in then," the woman replied. "He's waiting for you, I'll have your water in a bit." Harry limped into the office to find a man sitting behind a large desk.

"Mr. Potter I presume?" The man offered his hand. "Have a seat."

"Thank you," Harry sat down.

"Here's your water sir," the receptionist appeared.

"Thank you." Harry reached into his pocket and pulled out a couple bottles of pills. Shaking a few out into his hand, he swallowed them with a bit of his water. "For pain and to prevent infection," Harry

explained upon noticing the man's confused look. "Sort of like potions but more convenient to carry."

"I see," the Lawyer nodded. "What can I do for you?"

"I'd like to sue several people," Harry replied. "And I thought I'd need a bit of help to do it."

"Does it have something to do with your injury?"

"Not directly," Harry replied. "I have someone else working on that."

"The treatment you received from the Daily Prophet and the Ministry last year then?"

"Yes," Harry agreed. "I'd also like to sue Professor Dumbledore."

"Dumbledore?" The man's eyes widened a bit. "What's he done?"

"He placed me in an abusive home and had me kept as a virtual prisoner," Harry replied.

"Let me get a bit more information before filing," the man said. "I'm going to have to build an airtight case to deal with him."

"I'd also like to sue several pureblood families," Harry went on. "And to sue Tom Riddle AKA Voldemort."

"You want to do what?" The lawyer's eyes widened in shock, "do you want to die?"

"I figure that I can't possibly get any higher on the hit list." Harry shrugged. "Why not have some fun with it."

"I'm afraid I can get higher on the list." The man pursed his lips. "I'm willing to take on all the cases except for the ones involving Voldemort and his Death Eaters."

"Do you know anyone who would?" Harry asked hopefully.

"I might," the man mused. "Why don't you let me wait to file everything while you have a chance to talk with her."

"Ok," Harry agreed. "How do I get there?"

"She's in the office down the hall," the Lawyer replied. "Be sure that she knows who your mother was. It might help."

"Right," Harry agreed with a nod. "Thank you for your help."

"Don't thank me until I've done more for you than hand you off," the man said. "Sorry about refusing part of your case but . . . I've got a family and . . ."

"I understand," Harry interrupted. "Thank you all the same." Harry walked down the hall and opened the door to find a beautiful blond woman sitting at a desk.

"What?" The woman asked with a scowl.

"I wanted to speak with you about taking a case," Harry replied nervously.

"I know you don't have an appointment," the woman said. "Come back when you get one."

"If it helps," Harry continued. "Lily was my mother."

"You're Lily's boy?" The woman rose from her desk and walked up to Harry. "Yes, you have her eyes and cheeks." She walked around Harry as if she were inspecting a horse. "And a bit of her build before she got her growth spurt."

"Everyone else always says I look like my dad," Harry offered.

"Everyone else is an idiot," she said bluntly. "And I doubt most of them took the time to get to know your mother. Have a seat."

"Thank you." Harry limped over to the chair and fell into it.

"What happened to you," she demanded.

"Car accident," Harry replied. "Healers say I'll have a limp for the rest of my life."



"Which healers?"

"Hogwarts school nurse."

"We'll see about that later," the woman mused. "This accident happened in the muggle world, do you have a muggle solicitor to deal with this?"

"Yes I do," Harry agreed.

"Good," she said in approval. "Why did you come here? Was it to talk about your mother?"

"No," Harry said. "It would have been if I'd have known that you knew my mother. But I came because I want to sue some people and the man down the hall sent me to you."

"Smithers sent you?" She said in surprise. "Wouldn't have thought the bastard would let you go after he had his hooks in you."

"One of the people I wanted to sue was Voldemort," Harry offered.

"For the death of your parents?"

"And kidnapping me, torturing me, attempting to murder me, destroying some of my property, etc."

"We'll have to find out what his birth name is first," she said. "Goblins will ignore a court order unless it has a birth name on it and even then it's hard to get anything out of them."

"It's Tom Riddle," Harry said.

"Interesting," she purred. "Who else did you want to sue?"

"Several Death Eaters," Harry replied. "I have their names too. Professor Dumbledore, the Ministry, and the Daily Prophet to start."

"Alright," the woman agreed. "I'll take the cases. With your permission, I'd like to farm out some of the suits to other attorneys. Voldemort and the Death Eaters I'll keep for myself."

"What'll this cost me?"

"Don't worry about the cost," the woman waved off Harry's concern. "I'll deal with it myself. Do you need a way to get home?"

"I'm staying at the Leaky Cauldron," Harry said. "And I'm not going back to live with my relatives ever again."

"Why?"

"They're the ones I'm suing in the muggle world," Harry said. "Because of my leg and the way I grew up."

"What?" The woman asked flatly. "Explain that."

"I lived in a cupboard under the stairs until I got my Hogwarts letter," Harry said. "I won't go back."

"I see . . . and let me say that I am very sorry for the way you were forced to live."

"Don't worry about it," Harry waved off the woman's concerns.

"Lily was my best friend . . . my only friend." The woman's smile turned frigid. "And it is to my eternal shame that I did not check on you. I'm afraid that I was stupid enough to allow my enthusiasm to cloud my better judgement."

"It's ok," Harry said simply. "I'm sure you had more important things to worry about."

"No," the woman replied firmly. "I did not . . . you may rest assured that I will not allow such a lapse to happen ever again."

"Forgive me for being rude," Harry began. "But I never got your name, I'm Harry Potter."

"Murdia Malfoy," the woman replied.

"Malfoy?"

"Lucius is my brother," she explained. "And I do hope that he's one of the names on your list of Death Eaters?"

"He is," Harry cautiously confirmed.

"Then it is going to be a pleasure to break him," she said. "We don't get along."

"Good," Harry replied. "He's a death eater, he tried to use an unforgivable on me, and he was responsible for the Basilisk that attacked several students a few years ago."

"Any proof?"

"What counts as proof?" Harry asked.

"Did you witness these events or did you puzzle things out yourself?" She began. "If you witnessed them then we can extract your memories and show them to the court. If you puzzled things out then things will be a bit more difficult."

"I saw some of it," Harry said slowly. "I might have seen him put a diary containing Voldemort's memories in with Ginny's things."

"Anything else?" She asked, making a note to find out who 'Ginny' was later.

"I know . . . I think he was trying to use one of the unforgivables on me but a house elf stopped him."

"A house elf?" She said oddly. "Wouldn't have been named Nappy would it?"

"No, his name is Dobby." Harry said. "Why?"

"It's not important," she replied. "What about the rest?"

"He was there after Voldemort came back to life," Harry said.

"Alright," she began. "I can work with this. The first thing I want to do is have a competent healer take a look at that leg of yours."

"But Madame Pomfrey said . . ."

"Madame Pomfrey is a school nurse," Murdia said sharply. "I'm going to have a proper Healer take a look at your leg. The next thing we're going to do is get a competent Legilimencer check you for mental blocks and memory charms."

"I'd rather not," Harry whispered.

"Why?" Murdia demanded. "Did someone do something to you?"

"Dumbledore had Snape try to teach me Occlumency," Harry said slowly.

"How did he teach you?" The woman said gently. "Tell me Harry."

"He kept telling me to clear my mind," Harry replied. "Then he'd use legilimency to make me . . ."

"It's ok," she said. "I have an idea of what happened."

"Maybe if I'd tried harder," Harry began. "I . . . I just didn't think it was important enough to . . . maybe Sirius wouldn't have died." Harry finished lamely.

"It's not your fault Harry," she said. "The way that man chose to instruct you hasn't been used for quite some time."

"It hasn't?"

"No it hasn't," she agreed. "There are less stressful and more effective ways of learning to secure your mind. We can go over them later if you like."

"Ok," Harry said with a nod.

"You said you were living in the Leaky Cauldron?" She said suddenly.

"Yes."

"We'll work on getting you some place a bit more appropriate later," Mudia began. "I suppose it would be a good time to see that you're properly educated too."

"Properly educated?"

"To take your place in society," she explained. "Etiquette and that sort of thing."

"Do I really have to?"

"Would you like to win your case?" She retorted. "A lot of this is going to be fought in the court of public opinion. If we're going to succeed then we are going to have to get some of the older families on our side."

"Oh . . . I guess."

"Good," Murdia said firmly. "I'd also like to get you an instructor to teach you a formal dueling style."

"Dueling?" Harry asked hopefully.

"Yes," she agreed. "But I want you to keep in mind that the sort of thing you'll be learning won't be as useful in a real fight as one might think. I'll teach you the dirty stuff myself."

"What kind of dirty stuff?"

"Later," Murdia said with a wave. "For the moment, I just want you relax while I get these papers together. Don't hesitate to call if you want anything, I have an elf in the office and she would be happy to take care of any request you might have."

IIIIIIIIII

"You were right Professor," Tonks said. "He checked into the Leaky Cauldron earlier today."

"Excellent," Dumbledore said. "Keep an eye on him but don't allow yourself to be recognised."

"So we're just going to leave him there?"

"For a day or two," Dumbledore agreed. "Then it might be best to have Molly and the children stumble upon him. He may not agree return to Privet Drive but I think we'll be able to persuade him to go to stay with the Weasley family for the remainder of the summer."

"Alright Professor," Tonks agreed. "I can understand that. Harry sure is lucky to have us looking after him isn't he?"

"That he is Nymphadora, that he is."

IIIIIIIIII

"What are you reading?" Murdia asked as she filed the last stack of papers.

"The Prince," Harry said after carefully marking his page. "It's a book on . . ."

"I've read it," Murdia said dryly. "Along with Sun Tzu, von Clausewitz, Xenophon, and many many others. Remind me to give you a reading list later."

"Are they all like this?"

"Same idea," Murdia agreed. "Ready to go back to the Leaky Cauldron?"

"Yeah," Harry said. "Let's go."

Murdia withheld comment as she watched her friend's son painfully make his way down the stairs and towards the Leaky Cauldron. Well, she mused to herself. On the plus side, Lily's son had a little iron. Boy wasn't voicing a word of complaint. Least he was something she could work with, a good artist could turn something wonderful out of bad material but it was nice to start with something.

AN:

Few loose scene Omake for the above fic.

Harry's meet with his friends . . .

"I don't trust either of you," Harry winced at the bluntness of his statement.

"What?" Hermione asked. She felt sick to her stomach.

"Why?" Ron shouted looking like he was about to explode.

"It's for his own good," Harry said fighting to keep his face impassive. "Is that what he told you when he decided not to let me have any news?"

"Harry . . ." Hermione looked like she was about to burst into tears.

"If you've done that once then how am I to know that you haven't done it before or since?" Harry asked, he wished they hadn't pushed him into this conversation, "how am I to know that you won't do it again?"

"Mate I . . ." Ron couldn't meet his friend's eye.

"And that's without mentioning Ron's behavior at the triwizard," Harry added. "I'm sorry to mention this but why should I trust either of you when you've given me so much reason not to? But let's say I did trust you, let's say that I was willing to give you my secrets . . . anyone could look into your minds and take them. If my life has taught me anything it's that it's best I not trust anyone."

"Oh Harry." Hermione seemed to crumble and her body was racked with sobs.

"I'm sorry mate." Ron looked lost. "I . . . I'm sorry."

"Don't worry about it," Harry waved it off. "Just because I can never trust either of you doesn't mean we can't be friends, maybe we can hang out sometime."

"Sure," Ron replied absently then his legs wouldn't support him any longer and he fell back into his chair. "If you like."

"Great," Harry said enthusiastically. "I'll see you two around, and have a nice life if I don't."

"Oh Ron." Hermione regained some control as Harry left the room. "What have we done?"

Dumbledore has been skimming off the top to pay for things around the school and the order . . .

"Surely those that have greater resources should have a greater share to pay," Dumbledore protested. "Are you so concerned with money that you would ignore the greater good?"

The goblins have been helping him . . .

"Then it may be best to tell you that I am going to file papers against you and Gringotts as soon as I get back to my office," she said with her trade mark cold smile.

"Gringotts is exempt from Ministry law," the goblin said smugly. "If you have a legitimate complaint against the bank then you must take it to the Committee of Resolution. I might add that the committee hasn't found in favor of a human in . . . well, it's never found in favor of a human. I'd have thought a solicitor as accomplished as yourself would know that."

"Oh but I do," Murdia replied. "You see, the papers filed will be nothing more than a formality."

"A formality?" The goblin asked suspiciously.

"Yes," Murdia agreed. "You see, I don't intend to face you in either the Ministry court or the goblin one. I intend to try you in the court of public opinion. Imagine if you will the effect of every wizard learning of Gringotts violation of the agreements, imagine every wizard in the United Kingdom learning that Gringotts can not be trusted with their savings. What do you think would happen?"

"You can't do this," the goblin gasped. "It would ruin the goblin nation."



"It would." She said coldly. "Care to settle out of court?"

"What are your terms?"

The usual suspects ending . . .

"Thank you all for coming." Harry regarded the assembled reporters with a look that Snape would have envied. "As many of you may know, I am the subject of a prophecy that states roughly that a person matching my description will defeat a dark lord bearing some resemblance to Voldemort."

"Mist . . . Mister Potter," one of the reporters began. "Have you planned your next move?"

"I have," Harry agreed. "I plan to leave the United Kingdom and Voldemort behind to start a new life."

"But what about the prophecy?"

"Don't you get it?" Harry asked with a grin. "He's your problem now, you made him and it's your responsibility to destroy him. I stopped him as a babe, I stopped him as a child, I've fought him my entire life and I'm ready for a change. Thanks for the memories and don't bother looking for me." With that, Harry limped painfully out of the room and through the building. His limp began to fade as he walked up the street until it disappeared at the end of the block.

"How'd it go?" Murdia was waiting with a portkey.

"If they have any sense they'll use this as an excuse to solve their own problems, if not . . . well then they deserve what they get."

And a couple Omakes that have nothing to do with the above story . . .

OMAKE: Boys night out . . .

"Here's another one," Neville said drunkenly. "What would you rather be; a girl, or a werewolf."

"Werewolf," Ron said immediately. "Either way you turn into a ravenous blood thirsty creature once a month. But at least werewolves get that whole super sense thing."

"That and you don't loose your boys."

"Yeah, and most of them don't object to being locked up to prevent them from hurting someone."

"Not to mention the fact that they only turn into a beast at night," Dean laughed. "Eh Harry . . . Harry?"

Harry was staring at the entrance to the pub with a look of profound horror on his face and the only thing that kept him from wetting himself was the knowledge that he hadn't participated in the conversation.

"You ok mate?" Ron asked. "Mate?"

Harry just sort of shrunk, as if he hoped to fade into the chair and escape notice.

"Forget him," Seamus muttered. "But get this one guys, what's worse then being a girl?"

"What?"

"Girl werewolf," Seamus shouted. "Figure that cancels out the good of . . . oh hell."

"What is it Sea . . ." Ron spent a few moments staring at the group of angry girls standing a few feet away. "When did you guys get here?"

"Right when Neville started talking," Hermione said with a frightening smile.

"It was a very informative conversation," Lavender agreed.

"Don't worry guys," Neville slurred. "S'not a full moon, we're safe."

"Get em."

Harry didn't know what happened next and he hoped he never would. Using the finely honed instincts he'd developed through years of combat with Voldemort and his death eaters. Allowing his eyes to roll up into his head, Harry passed out and slid under the table.

OMAKE: You gotta recycle . . .

"So I was wondering," Harry began. "Where does all the food in Hogwarts come from?"

"I . . . I don't know," Hermione replied. "Maybe . . . hmmm."

"I'll go ask Dobby," Harry volunteered.

"You do that," Hermione agreed.

Harry walked down to the kitchen and was able to locate the aforementioned house elf without too much trouble. "Hey Dobby?"

"Yes Harry Potter sir?"

"I was wondering if you could tell me where all the food in Hogwarts comes from?"

"Yes Harry Potter sir," Dobby agreed. "Follow Dobby." The little elf took him through a dizzying array of passages until they were in front of a large door. "In here Harry Potter sir." They went through the large door and Harry had to resist the urge to vomit.

"Is this?"

"The cesspool Harry Potter sir," Dobby agreed. "Watch." Harry watched in horror as several house elves waved their hands over the pool of filth and transfigured into vegetables and loaves of bread.

"Don't tell me . . ."

"We is recycling Harry Potter sir," Dobby said.

"I . . . Dobby, could you do me a favor?"

"Yes Harry Potter sir?"

"Could you buy me some food from the muggle world?" Harry asked desperately. "I'll let you use the gold in my vault."

"Yes Harry Potter sir, Dobby can do that. But . . . why?"

"I . . . uh . . . enjoy cooking," Harry said. "And . . . it's a hobby of mine and I miss it."

"Dobby understands Harry Potter sir," Dobby said. "Dobby will arrange it."

Two days later . . .

"Hey Ron, have you noticed anything odd about Harry?"

"Aside from the fact that he's been making his own meals?" Ron asked.

"Yeah."

"He won't go into the great hall during meal times," Ron said after a moment of thought. "And he looked like he was going to vomit when I brought some of that pudding back to the dorm for a midnight snack."

"Odd isn't it?"

"That's Harry."

AN: Seen a lot of fics that have the wizarding world buy all of their food from the muggle world. Figured that I'd write up another way of doing it. So what's the fall out? Harry eventually breaks and tells his friends, the pureblood students don't see anything odd about it, might even say that it's no different then what happens in nature . . . just a bit faster. The muggle born join Harry and write home to their parents for their meals or arrange to get Harry to share.

Disclaimer: Don't read this, I've been up for two days and my mind is playing bad tricks on me.

No Really, Don't Read This

Listen to The Disclaimer

YOU HAVE ONLY YOURSELF TO BLAME

"Oh god not again," Harry groaned. "What year is it?"

"Hem hem."

"You again?" Harry asked in shock. "Well I'll soon take care of you toadus explodus." Everyone watched the toad like woman explode. "And that takes care of that, uh deathus eaters killus."

"ARG," Snape screamed. "My freaking ears."

"Uh . . . oops, deathus eaterus killus quicus and voldeus tooos," Harry added. "And that's that."

"Harry could you," Dumbledore tried to get the young boy's attention.

"Came back in time by mistake," Harry said. "It happens, frigging annoying though. I was in the middle of my wedding night this time."

"With who?" Hermione called out.

"You . . . this time."

"What do you mean this time?" Hermione demanded.

"Second marriage," Harry explained. "For both of us. Well . . . sort of."

"What do you mean sort of?"

"Might wanna work on that loop," Harry said. "You and Ron were married for two days, didn't work out though. You got an annulment because you never ended up consummating the marriage. Apparently, no one ever gave Ron the talk about how to insert tab 'a'

into slot 'b' and it freaked him out so much that he didn't want anything to do with you."

"What's slot 'b' Harry?" Ron asked.

"Ask Professor McGonagall to explain it to you later," Harry said. "And have her get Dumbledore's help, he has charts."

"Thanks mate," Ron cheered.

"So what happened with your marriage?" Hermione persisted.

"Ginny."

"YES."

"But it only lasted two months," Harry continued dashing the girl's hopes. "You don't even want to know the kinds of things she's into. Oh, that and she's narcissistic."

"So then we got together?"

"No they decided to switch and Ron started chasing me while Ginny chased you, not really sure why they did it. Might have been those paint chips they were eating . . . uh . . . Ron thought they were wall candy."

"Why did Ron think that?"

"I think you were still angry about the whole failed marriage thing," Harry mused. "Not really sure though. Anyway, the two of us started sleeping together so that we'd have someone to watch our backs and because four eyes were better than two. One thing led to another and we started dating and got married . . . so did Ron and Ginny."

"To who?" Hermione asked. "Harry . . . no . . . tell me you're joking."

"They're expecting twins," Harry said with a sick look on his face. "She likes his red hair and he likes the fact that she's one of the boys and it doesn't feel weird to be around her after hearing the talk. I just don't want to think about it."

"Oh god," Ginny fled the room with a sick look on her face and Ron followed . . . for about three steps and then he thought better of it and went to another part of the castle.

"Well . . . that was satisfying," Harry said to himself. "Gets them both back for that whole failed marriage anyway."

"Harry that wasn't true was it?"

"Some of it," Harry said with a shrug. "Your marriage really did end that way, Molly couldn't stop apologizing and blaming Arthur. Ron spent three years in St. Mungos and even then he refused to be alone in a room with you."

"And your marriage with Ginny?"

"Caught her with Lavender, Dean, and Professor Dumbledore the day before the wedding. She said she just needed one last wild memory, I said the wedding was off. Arthur couldn't stop apologizing for that one and kept shooting glares at Molly."

"Oh."

"Yep, was one of the . . . more memorable weeks in my life anyway."

"Weeks?"

"Your mother thought it would be romantic if we all had our weddings in the same week and Molly agreed."

"So what now?"

"Now I'm going to forget all this ever happened, and I suggest you do the same."

"Except for that look of dawning horror on their faces?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "Except for that."

AN: I warned you, I warned you all but did you listen? Huh? On your head be it, I didn't want to write this and I suggested that none of you read it but you had to ignore my warning didn't you. Well you get no

sympathy from me. On the other hand, wouldn't that be a great joke to play on a guy?



Disclaimer: Staring into the sun is bad for your eyes.

Tea for Four ends the War

"I'll send you the paperwork soon," Narcissa assured the newest member of her family. "Keep in touch."

"You too Cissy," Luna hugged the older woman. "Bye Bella, Andy, don't be strangers."

"Goodbye Luna," Bella kissed the young girl on the cheek. "Let me say again how pleased I am to have a sensible girl like yourself joining the family."

With one last hug, the girls split up to carryout their own part of the plan.

Luna walked away from the door and to the fireplace. After tossing in a handful of floo, Luna called out her destination and jumped in.

"Stup . . . Luna, what are you doing here?" Hermione shouted. "Is everything alright?"

"Everything is fine," Luna replied. "Why, are we under attack?"

"No we're not, everything is fine."

"Good"

"Good"

"So why did you ask me to come here?" Luna asked innocently.

"I . . . so what's new in your life?" Hermione said in defeat.

"I think you'll be happy to know about some interesting things that are happening in my life," Luna began.

"What?" Hermione took the bait

"I'm soon going to have access to the largest private library in England." Luna said proudly, "and I'll also have a rather massive fortune with which to buy more books."

"Tell me what to do to get access to it and I'll do it," Hermione loomed over the smaller girl. "I'll do anything . . . anything."

"Ok," Luna agreed. "But you have to swear an unbreakable wizards oath that you'll do one thing for me."

"What thing?" Hermione asked suspiciously.

"Nothing much," Luna replied. "Something similar to what you'd do anyway."

"I'll do it," Hermione agreed quickly. "What is it?"

"Good," Luna replied with a grin. "Now hold out your hand and we'll get things over and done with."

Grumbling a bit, Hermione held out her hand and completed the oath. "Now talk."

"I'm marrying Harry," Luna said. "And you're going to help me by becoming Harry's mistress."

"I can't do that," Hermione said in outrage.

"You entered an unbreakable oath," Luna reminded the other girl. "You do not want to break it, aside from the consequences there is a nasty fine."

"A fine?"

"If you manage to survive," Luna explained, leaving out the fact that the survival rate hovered just under one hundred percent and that the term 'unbreakable oath' was just a marketing ploy.

"I suppose I have no choice," Hermione said reluctantly. Damn it, if only she'd read that book on oaths . . . but the new version of

Hogwarts a History had just come out and she'd just had to have that so . . .

"Then you just have to agree to be Harry's mistress."

"Ok," Hermione said in defeat.

"And I'll be Harry's wife . . . oh it'll be so much fun."

"I only have one question," Hermione mustered up her remaining courage and spoke in a steady tone.

"What is it?" Luna asked quickly.

"Does Harry know about this?"

"Oh poo, I knew I forgot something . . . well, that's nothing that we can't take care of later."

IIIIIIIIII

"You wanted to speak with me Mum," Tonks asked with a frown. "You don't want me to stop chasing Remus do you?"

"No I've accepted the fact that you can't do any better," Andy said with a fake frown. "And I think he'll be good for you."

"Wha . . ."

"No what I wanted to do is forbid you from becoming Harry Potter's mistress," Andy interrupted her daughter. "Now I realise that I can't stop you from doing this due to a number of silly pure blood laws. But I'm telling you, as your mother that I do not want you from even considering it."

"You can't tell me what to do," Tonks screamed falling back on old patterns of behavior.

"I'm your mother, I just want what's best for you Dora."

"Grrr," Tonks stormed off.

"Excellent," Andy rubbed her hands together.

|||||

"You, you, you, and . . . you." Bella picked out several of the more attractive werewolves in her master's service. "You're fired, now go seduce this man and take lots of pictures."

"He's kinda cute," one of the werewolf wenches commented on Remus's picture.

"Just make him happy, very happy, and take lots of pictures." Bella commanded, "and bring a few friends."

"I don't think my twin sister's doing anything tonight," one of them mused.

"Whatever," Bella waved it off. "And stay with him till I tell you otherwise." Bella giggled to herself, that would keep him from interfering . . . and pay him back for being a decent sort about her niece. She'd never liked him in the past but debts must be paid and all that.

|||||

"Dora is that you dear?" Narcissa was waiting to meet Tonks when the girl stormed into the local watering hole. "What's wrong?"

"Aunt Narcissa," Tonks said coldly.

"Oh don't be like that dear, we both know you're back in the family so it's perfectly alright to stop pretending to hate each other. Why, your mother and I have started having tea every week to catch up on things. Now sit down and tell me what's bothering you."

"Well . . . "

"Bartender, bring my niece something to drink . . . now."

The nervous man quickly complied and Tonks took a seat.

"It's mum," Tonks said. "She's dead set on ruining my love life. And for some reason she just forbid me from becoming Harry Potter's mistress . . . not that he isn't a good sort and everything but I'm not sure I want to be anyone's mistress. All I want is a decent guy of my own that cares about me for me."

"You may have to resign yourself to sharing dear," Narcissa said lightly. "Good men are impossible to find."

"But what about . . ."

"You aren't really going to suggest that my husband is a good man are you?" Narcissa interrupted with a smile. "He's useful and rich but also arrogant and stupid. If he weren't so wrapped up in that little club of his then I'm not sure I'd stay married to him. Afterall, accidents are so easy to arrange."

"Uh . . . right."

"But you know what you should do to really show your mother?" Narcissa asked with a wicked grin. "You should fill out these official mistress forms and show them to her."

"Yeah . . . uh . . . why did you have these with you?"

"I'd be happy to talk about my personal life later," Narcissa said primly. "But right now we're talking about yours."

"O . . . k."

IIIIIIIIII

"Hello Ginny," Luna said to her friend. "I have some exciting news to share with you."

"What is it Luna?"

"I'm getting married to Harry," Luna said. "And you're invited."

"What?" Ginny asked dully.

"I thought a small wedding would be best," Luna continued. "So don't spread it around."

"But Harry was supposed to marry me," Ginny whined. "Luna how could you."

"That's right," Luna said with a slow nod. "You like Harry too don't you. Hmmm . . . I already told Hermione that she could be his mistress soooooooo." Luna's eyes widened in triumph. "That means you can be my mistress."

"Luna wha . . ." Ginny cut off as the strange blond embraced her and proceeded to give her a toe curling kiss.

"Oh it will be ever so much fun."

"Huh?" Ginny returned to earth a few hours later. "What just happened?"

|||||

"You," Narcissa strolled into the ministry and grabbed one of her husband's pet employees.

"Me?" The man asked nervously.

"I need you to file these papers," she handed him the marriage and official mistress contracts. "Now."

"Yes ma'am." The flunky agreed quickly.

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"Potter has three girl friends?" Voldemort asked incredulously, "and they all know about each other?"

"Yes my lord," the death eater replied nervously. "And I'm told that he's getting married to a fourth girl."

"Damn . . . Bella, take a letter." Voldemort called out, "Potter . . . no scratch that, dear Harry. I think it's time that we end this silly little war. I am sure that you are tired of all this fighting and I know I am so I'd

like to propose a solution to this conflict. You allow me to take the island of Azkaban and a few of the surrounding islands and I will agree to never ever bother you again and to stop attacking people all the time and what not. Sincerely yours, yadda yadda yadda."

"I shall send it right away my lord," Bella promised.

"Forgive me for asking my lord," one of the death eaters began.

"You want to know why I'm giving up," Voldemort said with a nod. "Anyone that can convince four girls to enter an arrangement like Potter has is a ruthless cunning bastard, we'd never stand a chance against such a mind . . . Crucio."

IIIIIIIIII

Harry reread the letter for the fifteenth time and he still couldn't believe it.

"This can't be right," Harry muttered to himself. "Dark Lords don't just retire . . . do they?"

AN: One thing before I begin, it's not Harry's Harem . . . it's Luna's. I usually write pairings as an excuse to write more about the character. Hermione is my favorite character so I tend to use her a lot, I love Luna and she's fun to write, hmmm what else, it's all based on what the story wants and who I like to write about. This fic started with the idea that Luna wants to date Harry but is worried that Hermione is too territorial and will ruin things, an idea she got from listening to Cho's angry rants or some such. After that I started thinking about solutions for that problem and I married it to an idea about Harry having to marry because he's Sirius's heir, something you see a lot of. This concludes my notes, though I do have one thing to say before I sign off. If being Sirius's heir forces Harry to marry someone, then why the hell wasn't Sirius forced to marry someone? I know authors aren't supposed to point out the plot holes in their own stories but . . .

Omake: Dobby can help you relax, blame nonjon

"What's wrong Harry Potter sir?" Dobby asked.

"I have two mistresses and I'm betrothed to another girl," Harry replied. "And my betrothed has her own mistress. I know I said I wanted a big family but not like this."

"Why doesn't Harry Potter sir have his girly friends help him relax?"

"I can't do that," Harry said. "It wouldn't be right."

"Then Dobby will help Harry Potter sir . . . relax."

"That's ok Dobby," Harry said as he backed out of the room quickly. "I think I'll ask the girls for help after all."

"If they won't help then Dobby will," the little elf maintained. "Even if Dobby has to force Harry Potter sir for his own good."

"Oh god," Harry fled the room in search of one of the girls.

"Thank you Dobby," Luna's voice appeared out of nothingness. "I was starting to become quite cross with him."

"Missy Tonky was also frustrated," Dobby supplied helpfully. "And Dobby is always happy to help Harry Potter sir and his Loony and his Hermy and his Tonky."

"Thank you Dobby."

Omake: Not the way I pictured this confrontation.

"You tortured my parents into insanity," Neville screamed.

"And they killed several of my best friends including my sister in law," Bellatrix retorted. "Are you sure you want to have this conversation?"

"What?"

"It was a war," Bellatrix said with a shrug. "Things like that happen in war and your parents made that thing happen more then most of them did."

"My parents . . . "



"My sister in law wasn't a Death Eater," Bellatrix said harshly. "Just in the wrong place at the wrong time. They raided the place and I saw your mother hit her with a cutting curse across the neck, she was five months pregnant."

Disclaimer: Another idea I haven't seen before.

Loyalty Unto Disgrace

"NO," Peter screamed. "You can't."

"I wana know why you did it Peter," Sirius growled.

"Just have me kissed," Peter begged. "Or sent to Azkaban. I won't talk."

"Force his mouth open," Sirius suggested.

"With pleasure," Remus agreed. "Afraid this is going to hurt quite a bit Peter."

"Too bad," Sirius said unsympathetically.

Peter screamed as his mouth was forced open and the truth potion slid down his throat.

"Why'd you do it Peter?" Remus growled. "Why'd you join Voldemort?"

"I had to keep Lily and James safe," Peter droned. Sirius and Remus shared a look of confusion.

"Then why did you betray Lily and James?" Sirius asked with a frown.

"I didn't."

"You led Voldemort to them, how is that protecting them?" Sirius demanded.

"I didn't take Voldemort to them," Peter replied.

"Who did you take Voldemort to?" Remus asked with an odd look on his face.

"Decoys."

"What decoys?"

"The ones I set up to protect them," Peter choked.

"Then what about Harry?" Sirius screamed. "Why would Lily leave her baby behind?"

"She didn't."

"Yes she did," Sirius ranted. "Harry was left in the house with your decoys."

"He wasn't."

"Then who was?"

"Another decoy."

"What were the decoys?" Remus asked calmly.

"Homunculi."

"What do you think?" Remus asked.

"Either he found a way to get around truth potions . . ."

"Or we didn't really loose our friends," Remus said. "At least not do to his actions."

"Are Lily, James, and Harry alive?"

"I . . ."

"Are they alive?"

"Yes."

"What happened?"

"I led Voldemort to the decoys and let him kill them," Peter droned. "The plan was to let him kill the decoys so he'd stop looking but something went wrong . . . or right. The spell rebounded off Harry's simulacrum and hit the Dark Lord."

"So then what?"

"It didn't destroy him," Peter said. "So I had to keep them safe. I had to keep them safe."

"Why'd you frame me?"

"I knew you'd be found innocent at the trial." Tears were leaking out the corners of Peter's eyes. "I knew Dumbledore would never let you get through the trial without finding out why."

"So when I got sent to Azkaban without a trial it ruined your plans?"

"Yes."

"Why didn't you come forward?" Remus asked. "To free Sirius?"

"I would have had to admit what I did," Peter sobbed. "It would have put them in danger. I had to leave Sirius there."

"Why'd you do it all?"

"We all agreed to do anything to keep Harry safe," Peter said in a dull voice. The potion was begging to wear off but he saw no reason to stop talking now. "We all agreed."

"We did Peter," Sirius sighed. "But I thought it would mean dieing for him."

"If I died then the secret would get out," Peter explained. "If I'd have known . . . Sirius if I'd have known that there wouldn't be a trial I'd have gone to Azkaban in your place. I'm . . . god Sirius there should have been a trial."

"I know Peter, you did a good job."

"There should have been a trial," Peter repeated. "Why didn't they have a trial?"

"At a guess, they knew Sirius was innocent." Remus said dryly. "They let most of their pet Death Eaters escape after all."

AN: Peter didn't betray Lily and James, he betrayed a group of fakes. His plan was to send Sirius to jail for a few days until the trial while he escaped. Peter just wanted a few days head start but everything went wrong. As for the Potter family? They're still hiding, waiting until things are safe again. The Harry in the books is a simulacrum that was given life somehow when the killing curse hit him.

Omake: Nymphadora's Ward

"This is most unusual," Dumbledore said as the goblins ushered him into the room. "Can't you just release his will to me or the named solicitor?"

"Sirius Black left detailed instructions on what was to be done," the goblin replied. "And paid well enough to insure that they were carried out."

Dumbledore took his seat and was soon joined by the rest of the Order.

"Ahem," the solicitor coughed as he took his place at the podium. "If there are no objections then seeing as how everyone is present, I will now carryout the instructions in Sirius Black's will. Firstly, Andromeda Tonks nee Black will be reinstated into the family Black as will her daughter Nymphadora Tonks. Secondly, the family Black will expel any member known to be a marked supporter of the current Dark Lord Vol . . . Vol . . . Voldemort." The Solicitor said quickly. "Thirdly, the Black family assets and the personal assets of Sirius Black will go to his godson Harry Potter. Finally, if Harry Potter is not of age then Nymphadora Tonks will assume control over the family assets until Harry comes of age or is emancipated and guardianship of Harry Potter will be given over to Nymphadora Tonks." The solicitor looked around the crowded room and at all the shocked faces. "Mr. Black has also left a personal note for Ms. Tonks that I am to read aloud. Cousin, protect him, love him, stand by him. Do what I never could."

Tonks takes Harry back to her apartment, tells Dumbledore to stuff it when he insists that Harry must stay at Privvy drive. Possibly some interaction with Amelia Bones, after all she of all people knows what Tonks has to do.

Omake: Replacing the wards . . .

Sirius screamed in frustration. It had taken him months but he'd finally found a way to replace the all important blood wards and he couldn't do it. Not because of the amount of magic involved, a trivial bit really. But because he didn't have the necessary equipment. "Can't even use a bloody gender changing charm, both because it would traumatise both me and Harry and because I already lost it in sixth year . . . good times." Sirius had a small smile on his face. "DAMN IT," Sirius screamed again. "WHY, BLOODY HELL WHY?"

"Be quiet," Molly said sharply. "Some of us are trying to sleep."

"And some of us are trying to find a way to keep Harry safe," Sirius snapped. The ex-con grabbed a bottle and took a deep pull. "And when they finally do then can't bloody do it because of a lack of equipment, even leaving aside how frigging weird it would be."

"What are you talking about?" Molly asked softly.

"I found a way help Harry," Sirius sobbed. "And I can't do it, neither can you, neither can anyone in the whole bloody useless Order."

"Oh." Molly didn't know how to react to that. "Why don't I put up a few charms so you don't wake up the children."

"Shanks Mols," Sirius slurred. "Awas likeed ya . . . awas jels o'athr . . ."

"Oh Sirius," Molly said sadly. The woman put several charms up and returned to her room.

Not five minutes later, the first of the listeners slipped into the room to find out what Sirius had found. It had to be horrible if he wasn't even willing to consider it. Her eyes widened as she read the passage, it wouldn't be much of a chore really. And Harry did need to be kept safe . . . after quickly copying the incantation and memorising the ritual, she slipped out of the room.

Ten minutes later the next listener slipped in, with the same results. Five minutes after she disappeared, the next one arrived. This sequence repeated itself several times that night.

IIIIIIIIII

"Morning Harry," Hermione said. "How was your night."

"Had the best dreams," Harry replied.

"Oh?" Hermione purred. "Was I in it?"

"The first one," Harry agreed with a deep blush.

"Was it a . . . wait first one?"

"The next one was about Ginny," Harry said with a deeper blush. "Then Luna, Tonks, Susan, Katie, Angelina . . ."

Hermione's eyes glazed as Harry listed off names and she looked around the table to see several more shocked girls.

"But . . . I thought I was going to be the one?" Ginny wailed.

"So did everyone else," Luna said as she took a seat at the table. "It was quite amusing to watch you all miss each other by a few seconds."

"But . . ."

"See you tonight Harry," Luna said as she walked off. "Gotta make sure those wards stay up."

"Wards aren't going to be the only thing up all night," Neville muttered. "Why couldn't my mum put blood wards on me?" Neville took another bite. "And continuing that thought, why couldn't half the bloody girls in school take it upon themselves to replace the component of the bloody blood wards with me?"

"You said it mate," Dean agreed. "It was quite a show."

AN: Several girls are giving it up so that Harry is safe, don't ever think I ever saw this one. Might use the concept in a real fic some day.



Disclaimer: More of this needed to get written. Part two of Dobby Saves the Day.

### Dobby the Mighty

Harry Potter smiled. For the first time in his life, he had his own room and toys to play with. Granted it was another mean trick by the Dursley family, granted it would all be taken from him, and granted they'd told him that an insane evil monkey was living in his closet and would eat his brain. But despite all that, things were looking up at the moment and it Harry had learned that it was best to enjoy these things while he could.

"Hello Harry Potter sir," Dobby said. "Would Harry Potter sir like to go play with his Hermy and his new Loveygood now?"

"Ok Mister Evil Monkey," Harry agreed. The little guy had terrorised the Dursleys, he couldn't be all bad could he?"

"Dobby is not an evil monkey," Dobby said firmly. "Dobby is Dobby."

"Ok Mister Dobby," Harry ammended.

"The great Harry Potter sir is calling Dobby Mister?" Dobby looked like he was going to faint. "Oh what a happy day."

"You said something about going to play?"

"Ms. Hermy's mummy doesn't want Dobby to take Harry Potter sir's Hermy away," Dobby explained. "So Dobby and Sneezy is taking Harry Potter sir and his Loveygood to Harry Potter sir's Hermy."

"Ok."

"Hold my hand Harry Potter sir," Dobby said firmly. Harry took Dobby's hand and they appeared in a plush living room next to a small girl with bushy hair.

"Hello," she said. "My name is Hermione. Who are you?"

"My name is Harry," Harry replied. "Do you want to be friends?" He finished hopefully.

"Ok," she agreed happily. Before they could continue their conversation, they were joined by a blond woman and her equally blond daughter.

"You must be Harry," the blond woman said with a kind smile. "This is my daughter Luna."

"This is Hermione," Harry said.

"Why don't you three play while I go introduce myself to Hermione's mother."

"Ok," Harry agreed.

The woman gave one last look at the three children to make sure that everything was going ok before she went off in search of the young girl's mother.

"Hello, my name is . . ."

"Thank god," the woman nearly shouted. "My name is Louise Granger, I need you to keep my away from my daughter."

"As I was saying, my name is Alecia Lovegood. Why do you need me to keep you away from your daughter?"

"Because I'm having a psychotic break and I might pose a danger to her," the woman explained. "I saw a talking monkey earlier. I knew I shouldn't have tried smoking marijuana in college, they said that trying it once wouldn't hurt but I knew I shouldn't have tried it."

"That is serious," Alecia agreed. "I've got the house elves watching the children right now so they should be safe."

"Good, my husband is coming home right now and . . . wait house elves?"

"Two of them," Alecia agreed. "Yours and another that I think belongs to Harry Potter. So where did you go to school? I don't recognise you from Hogwarts."

"What's Hogwarts?"

"Honey, I'm home." The arrival of Hermione's father prevented Alecia from having to answer. "Good, you had one of the neighbors come in. Now what's this about a psychotic break?"

"She saw some sort of talking monkey," Alecia said quickly. "The house elves are watching the children right now."

"House elves?"

"Yes, and it's more serious then we first thought. She doesn't even remember Hogwarts."

"What's Hogwarts?"

"Oh god," Alecia said as she drew her wand. "You've both got it. I'm sorry, but this is for your own good. You'll thank me for it later." She stunned both Grangers and stepped back into the living room. "Dobby was it?"

"Yes Misus Lovegood ma'am."

"They're both very sick but I think we can make them better, I need you to go to St. Mungo's and bring back two of their better Healers."

"Dobby can do that," the little elf agreed.

"What's wrong with mummy and daddy?" Hermione demanded.

"Nothing we can't fix," Alecia said with a smile. "So don't worry, ok?"

"Ok," Hermione agreed.

"So do you like playing with Luna and Harry?"

Dobby returned with a group of Healers a few minutes later.

"Thank god you got here," Alecia said. "We've got two people, a witch and a wizard who don't remember going to Hogwarts. The witch has been seeing strange visions and sent her house elf to come get me to look after her daughter. By the time I got here, they didn't even remember what house elves were."

"Gods," the lead Healer said in horror. "What a terrible thing to happen." The Healers rushed out of the room and began working on the Granger family.

"What's going on?" Hermione whined.

"Everything will be fine honey," Alecia said as she gathered the girl into a hug. "Your parents have just forgotten their magic. The Healers will make everything better again ok?"

"Ok." The girl hiccuped. The children went back to playing and Alecia got up to check on the Healers.

"Well?" She asked.

"It's worse then you said it was," the Healer said quietly. "Whatever took their memories also took their magic. I don't know what could have done something like this, it's . . . it's like nothing I've ever seen before."

"Can you fix it?"

"No." The Healer looked like he was going to cry. "Maybe if we'd have gotten here a little sooner. Best we can do is push enough magic into them to make them Squibs and hope that the memories return on their own."

"What about their child?"

"I took a quick look at her when I arrived," the Healer whispered. "And I didn't see anything wrong with her magic, same with the other children."

"Thank god they managed to send their house elf to me before it was too late then," Alecia whispered. "Imagine what could have happened if they hadn't."

"I filed a report with the Ministry and they said they couldn't find any records on this couple."

"Probably went to ground when it looked like 'you-know-who' was rampaging to protect their daughter and did their best to erase their records before they left."

"Then it's likely that they had friends in the upper levels of the Ministry."

"And it's unlikely that any of them survived," Alecia agreed. "The upper levels got hit so hard that . . ."

"Yeah."

"I just wonder why she sent that elf to me?"

"This might not have been her original face," the Healer said with a shrug. "Or maybe it's because she knew you were alive, your husband does run the Quibbler."

"Her elf said that he needed a Lovegood."

"That must be why then, she knew she could trust the Lovegood family and she knew you were alive."

"Poor woman."

"You look after the children," the Healer suggested. "We'll get them back to the hospital and we'll do what we can for them. Explain what happened to their daughter, tell her that we'll do everything we can but don't lie to her. We'll do all we can but like I said, the best we can hope for is to make them Squibs."

"What a horrible thing to do to a witch," Alecia said sadly. "Taking away her magic. If only I had gotten here sooner."

"Just keep telling yourself that you got here soon enough to save the daughter, that's all you can do."

"I know, thank you. I'll be at my home if you need me. Their wards must not have been strong enough and I'd really feel better if I got back behind mine."

"I'll be sure to pass that on to the Aurors."

"Thank you."

Alecia gathered up the children and returned to her home. Hermione seemed confused by everything that had happened and seemed upset that her parents hadn't told her about the fact that they were losing their magic.

"Probably didn't want to worry you dear," Alecia tried to assure the young girl. "I won't lie to you, everything won't go back to the way they were. But the Healers will do everything they can."

"Ok."

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Amelia Bones had been an Auror for several years and she was on her way up. Proof of that was the fact that she'd been assigned to be the lead on the Granger case.

"Well?" She demanded.

"It's like the Lovegood woman said," the other Auror replied. "We can find a little magic, but not much. Can't find any definite signs of the spell that hit them."

"Any sign of the wards?"

"No, not even sure they had any up."

"Makes sense, from what we know they were trying to hide and wards would have just stood out in this neighborhood."

"Still can't believe they'd do something like this to two people, what a horrible thing to do."

"I've been looking through the missing," Amelia said with a sigh. "Far too many people missing to be sure but I think I've narrowed it down to five people."

"Anyone you know?"

"Two of them went through my Auror class with me and another person on the list was an unspeakable."

"Just the sort of people that would be high up on the target list."

"Yeah."

"Any word from the Healers?"

"It took some doing but they managed to convince the Grangers of what happened, who ever did this to them was good. Didn't even leave a trace of their old memories."

"So they'll never recover?"

"Doesn't look like it."

"Thank god they managed to send their house elf for help or we'd have never figured out what happened."

AN: No the Granger family isn't displaced wizards that had their memories removed along with their magic. The wizarding world has decided that they are a magical family and is twisting the evidence to fit that idea.

Disclaimer: Like I said in the notes which one would assume you haven't read yet. I first saw this concept in a Star Trek episode.

Forgotten Atlantis

"Have you thought about using the room to fight Voldemort?" Hermione asked.

"What do you mean?" Harry replied.

"I mean, think about the room providing you with something that will help you."

"Couldn't hurt," Ron added his own two cents. "Let's try it." The trio went to the room and entered after making the necessary preparations. "What is it?"

"It looks like a box," Hermione said with a frown. "Open it Harry." Harry walked open to the box and began opening it.

"What's in it?"

"I see . . ."

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"Wake up husband," a woman's voice said softly.

"Hwa . . ." Harry looked up to see a lovely girl of about his age regarding him with a serene gaze. "Husband?"

"Since this morning remember," she asked with a grin. "Get up."

"Where am I?" Harry looked around in confusion. "Who are you?"

"You're home husband," the woman said softly. "I'm your wife, Adrianne don't you remember?"

"I . . . don't remember," Harry gasped. "Where are Ron and Hermione?"

"I don't know those names husband," she said. "Who are they?"



"They're my friends at Hogwarts," Harry explained.

"I don't know any Hogwarts either," she said with growing concern. "Rest husband, I shall return soon."

"What's happening?" Harry muttered to himself. The woman returned a few minutes later with an older man.

"How are you feeling?" The old man asked. "Does your head hurt?"

"I'm feeling confused," Harry replied. "The last thing I remember, I was at Hogwarts with Ron and Hermione."

"It's just like I told you," Adrianne said. "He doesn't remember anything."

"And there have been no blows to the head?" The old man said. "Odd . . . perhaps . . . hmmm. Well, I see no damage that could explain the loss of memory. Perhaps he had an odd reaction to something he ate or maybe it was all brought on by stress."

"So he's going to be ok?"

"He should be," the old man agreed. "Stay with your husband Adrianne, make sure he knows how much you love him, and tell him about his life. We can only hope that his memory will return in time."

"But what about these strange people and places?"

"I would guess that his brain is trying to find a way to fill the emptiness," he ventured with a frown.

"Thank you," she said. The woman turned away and returned to her spot at Harry's bedside. "We met when we were small children and . . ." She talked to him for several hours, she told him about their shared childhood, about the time they'd spent growing up, and about the day he'd finally asked for her hand in marriage.

"I don't remember any of that," Harry whispered. After hearing her story, a seed of doubt had been planted. Maybe everything he knew was a lie, maybe . . . maybe it had all been some sort of fever dream.

"That is fine husband, I shall remember for both of us."

"But what about . . . what about magic?" Harry asked nervously. "Was that all a dream too?"

"Magic is no dream husband," she said with a smile. "It's all around us, the force that keeps our society running."

"Where's my wand?"

"Wand?" She asked in confusion. "What's that?"

"It's what you use to channel magic," Harry replied. "You know?"

"I don't," she said quickly. "Magic needs rituals to be channeled. It takes a long time but the result is usually worth it."

"Show me," Harry demanded.

"You're still too weak."

"Show me," Harry persisted.

"Yes husband," she agreed unhappily. "Wait here and I shall bring you something to study."

She brought him the materials and Harry spent hours poring over them, those hours turned to days, the days to months, and the months to years. He studied until he was ready to collapse, he studied until he knew more about their system of magic than the greatest sages. It was all for one purpose, to find a way home. As he did this, there was one constant in his life, his 'wife.' She refused to leave his side and devoted herself to aiding him in his self appointed task.

"What now husband?" She asked after he had studied everything he could find.

"I need to go to the mainland," Harry croaked. "I need to look for Hogwarts."

"Still looking for that place?" She said hotly. "Is it . . . yes husband." She caught herself and returned to her normal manner. "If you say you must."

"And after I get back," Harry took a deep breath. "I was thinking of building another room."

"Why?"

"I was thinking that we could have a baby," Harry said hopefully.

"Oh husband," she said joyfully as she threw herself into his arms. "I've been waiting years to hear that."

Harry made his trip to the mainland and learned much about the conditions outside his home, he did not however learn any clue as to the location or fate of his lost friends or his school.

Harry returned and his wife bore him a son who she insisted on naming him Myrddin after the stories he'd told of a great wizard from his . . . dream? Being a father agreed with him, and a few years later he had a daughter to keep his son company.

Fatherhood did not slow his pursuit of magic and Harry passed that love on to his children. Myrddin shared his father's interest in magic and took to his studies with a frightening intensity. Harry's daughter on the other hand was fascinated by the stories he told her about magic wands and she became determined to make her father's dream a reality.

The next few decades were the happiest of Harry's life, it seemed that nothing could go wrong until war came to destroy his idyllic life.

"I just don't think that fighting back is the answer," Myrddin argued. "Father, we should run. I've read your notes and I know that the mainland has good land for growing crops. We could live in peace."

"For a few years," Harry allowed. "Until they caught up to us."

"But father . . ."

"I'll make my stand here," Harry said firmly. "I'm too old to run off to start a new life. Take your sister and her family and go with my blessing." Harry regarded his son with an unreadable look.

"If you're staying then so am I," Myrddin said stubbornly.

"You have a responsibility to your sister and your nephew," Harry said. "Ollivander is only five years old."

"But father . . . "

"Like I said," Harry tried again. "You can go to the mainland and you will escape the war for a few years, unless I stop them here."

"Yes father," he agreed finally. "What about mother?"

"Your mother," Harry sighed. "Your mother is staying with me, she won't leave and . . . and it wouldn't matter anyway."

"What do you mean father?"

"She's been sick," Harry explained sadly. "She wouldn't have long anyway."

"That's why you won't leave," Harry's son said with dawning understanding. "You want to die with mother."

"I'd rather not live without her," Harry allowed. "Go son, it won't be long before their fleet arrives and if you wait too long."

"Farewell father," Myrddin said firmly. "I will make you proud."

"You already have son," Harry said. "You already have."

Harry's prediction proved accurate and the enemy fleet arrived just days after what was left of his family escaped to the new land.

"Wife," Harry greeted the love of his life.

"Husband," she gasped. "What is it like outside?"

"Their armies are marching through our city," Harry said tightly. "Our people are being killed."

"The children?"

"Are safe," Harry assured the woman. "Safe and I shall keep them safe. I'm going to stop them."

"Keep our children safe," she whispered her last words.

"I shall, my love." Harry agreed as he began to draw power from his surroundings. Harry unleashed his power onto the land he'd grown to love, sinking his island home and destroying the enemy fleet.

"So now our story is at an end Husband." Harry looked up to see his dead wife smiling down at him.

"Wife," Harry said with a smile. "I had hoped to meet you on the other side."

"I am sorry husband," she said sadly. "Our people were at an end and we needed to find some way to insure that we would be remembered. Myrddin took his group to the mainland but it was decided that a more complete record should be left."

"No . . ."

"Yes husband, you were given the experience of one hundred men. All distilled into a single life."

"Who were you?"

"Your wife," she said with a weak smile. "Forgive me husband, and farewell."

"No," Harry gasped. "NOOOOOOO."

"Madame Pomphrey, he's waking up."

"How are you doing Mr. Potter?" The healer asked. "Mr. Potter."

Harry looked at the ghosts of his past with dead eyes. "I need a parchment and a quill."

"Harry what . . ."

"I need to write it before I forget," Harry said with tears flowing down his cheeks. "Please."

AN: Yes I stole this story line from a Star Trek episode, one of the better ones too. And no this is not plagiarism, if it were then there would be no story that wasn't. This is an idea I had for a prologue, one thing I never liked about that episode is that they never revisited it. They never seemed to admit that giving a man a family and then ripping it away is an extremely cruel and traumatic thing. So what now? Harry is depressed, he's lost everything. What does he care about Voldemort and everyone else? It would be like going away from home for fifty years and returning to your old life again. No idea of where to take this but I will mention that Voldemort should beware, Harry has the knowledge and power needed to destroy all of the wizarding world. All he needs is a reason to unleash it on Voldemort and his Death Eaters.

Disclaimer: Uh . . . do I have to say that it's illegal in most of the world?

A Diplomatic Affair

"Hello Minerva."

"Headmaster."

"I apologize for interrupting your class like this but I'm afraid I'm going to have to borrow Mr. Potter for a bit."

"You're excused from class Mr. Potter," Minerva warmed a bit to say. "I'm sure Ms. Granger will be kind enough to let you see her notes and to pick up your homework."

"Of course I will Professor McGonagall," Hermione agreed quickly.

"Go on Mr. Potter."

Harry got up out of his chair and walked out of the room. "What's this about sir?"

"You are aware of the fact that I hold a number of positions both here and abroad?"

"Yes?"

"Have you wondered why I never chose to exert my influence as the Supreme Mugwump of the International Confederation of Wizards to help our cause?"

"I always assumed that . . . yes sir."

"It's ok to doubt me Harry," Dumbledore said kindly. "I understand that your friend Ron thinks that I'm completely off my rocker."

"Yes sir."

"The truth is that the International Confederation of Wizards sounds very impressive, but has little actual power." Dumbledore sighed. "Especially now that the majority of its members . . . former members

rather have chosen to leave it. At the moment, it's little more than a grouping of European countries and a few former colonies that have chosen to stay out of respect to their former masters."

"What's this all have to do with me sir?"

"Harry . . . you realise how extraordinary your survival was do you not?"

"Bloody boy who lived," Harry muttered in disgust.

"Precisely," Dumbledore agreed. "I hate to ask you, but your fame could open several doors that have been closed off for centuries in some cases. Harry . . . earlier today I received an invitation to a diplomatic function in the Sultanate of Doha."

"So?"

"So it stated that I was only welcome if I came as your guest," Dumbledore explained. "It is your decision of course but . . ."

"I'll do it," Harry said firmly. "What do I have to do?"

"Just mingle," Dumbledore said with twinkling eyes. "I'll take care of the rest."

"Yes sir, will everyone speak English?"

"There will be a charm put up to allow mutual comprehension," Dumbledore said dryly. "Though I'm told that it sometimes makes . . . odd errors in translation so do not take anything you hear too seriously."

"I understand, should I change into my formal robes?"

"Yes you should," Dumbledore agreed. "As should I come to think of it, meet me in the great hall when you've finished."

Harry walked back to his dorm and grabbed a quick shower before changing and rejoining the Headmaster in the great hall.

"Ready Harry?"



"Yes sir."

"Good." He handed Harry a long wrapped object. "Put this on and we can be on our way."

"The sword of Gryffindor?" Harry asked in shock.

"You earned the right to wear it Harry," Dumbledore explained. "Now shall we go?"

"Yes sir." Harry quickly buckled on the sword and touched the portkey.

They appeared in front of an unpleasant looking man.

"Name?" He asked flatly.

"Harry Potter."

"Ah Mr. Potter, so good of you to accept our invitation."

"Thank you."

"Harry Potter and Guest," the man announced. "Go right in Mr. Potter." He motioned Harry towards a large opening that seemed to hang in the air.

Harry walked in and was dazzled by the sheer number of people and by their odd outfits. Drifting over to the punch bowl, Harry poured himself a drink and watched the crowd.

"Excuse me."

"Yes sir?" Harry replied. He turned to find an asian gentleman giving him an unreadable look.

"Do you know how to use that sword on your hip?"

"No sir."

"Then why are you wearing it?" He demanded.

"Because it saved my life."

"I see," the man seemed to calm. "My name is Ichiro Yamamoto."

"Harry Potter."

"Could you explain how it saved your life?"

"I stabbed it through the roof of a snake's mouth," Harry said. "It was mostly luck and I had a lot of help."

"What kind of snake?" Ichiro asked professionally. "And how large?"

"A basilisk," Harry said. "Not sure how large it was, I'm sure it looked bigger then it was and I wasn't in any condition to take measurements after the fight was over with."

"I understand, may I see the blade?"

Harry carefully drew the blade and held it flat on his hands for the man to take.

"Good steel," he said after a moment of examination. "A bit gaudy but functional."

"It is that," Harry agreed. "I . . . how'd you do that?" Harry asked in shock, the sword had shifted to more functional and less ascetic form.

"I suspect it was acting on your desire," Ichiro replied. "Take your sword back Harry."

"Thank you sir."

"Ichiro."

"Ichiro then."

"Would you like to learn to use this blade? To bring it honor in battle?"

"I would," Harry allowed. "But I'm not sure how I'd go about it."

"I have a gift that would help you learn," Ichiro said with a smile. "And in taking it you would be doing me a great favor."

"It's not dangerous is it?"

"Not to you," Ichiro said quickly. "But it could be to those that wish you harm."

"And it would be doing you a favor?" Harry felt that he should consult with Dumbledore before making any agreements, but it seemed harmless enough.

"You would."

"Then I accept, thank you sir."

"Thank you Harry," Ichiro said with a large grin. "So where are you from?"

"The United Kingdom," Harry said. "England to be precise."

"Really? I hear it rains there quite a bit."

"Sometimes," Harry agreed with a laugh. "What about your home? Where are you from?"

"I am from the nation of Nippon, Daimyo of a small and out of the way Provence of no consequence."

"I'd like to see it some day," Harry said suddenly. "I've never left the United Kingdom before today and I'd love to do some traveling."

"Of course you shall visit it one day," Ichiro said quickly. "You are welcome to visit at any time and I will be happy to offer hospitality, humble though it may be."

"I wish I could offer the same," Harry said weakly. "But I don't even have a humble home, I'd be happy to show you around if they let me though."

"Thank you Harry, I shall keep that in mind. Have you had a chance to meet our host the Sultan of Doha?"

"Not yet."

"Then come with me, he's a friend of mine and would be delighted to hear the story of what happened with the snake. I'd like to hear a few of the details too come to think of it."

Harry spent the rest of the night telling and being told stories of adventure and misfortune and before he knew it, the party was winding down and Dumbledore was at his elbow.

"Time to go Harry."

"Yes sir," Harry agreed.

"All in all I believe that it was a successful night," Dumbledore said thoughtfully. "I received some promising leads anyway."

"Good."

"Come with me, we have one more thing to do before we can return to Hogwarts."

"What's that?"

"Our host will present us with a small gift, something to remember the night."

"Oh."

"The important thing is to accept the gift and thank the host for the thought," Dumbledore continued. "Rejecting it would be a rather large insult."

"I understand sir."

"Good, this way Harry." They walked towards the door and Harry could see the servants passing small boxes to the guests as they left.

"Leaving Harry?" A man a few years older than Harry asked as they approached the door.

"Yeah Aliyy," Harry agreed. "It was a great party though."

"Your highness," Dumbledore said in shock. "I apologize for the familiar way he addressed you."

"Harry is a friend of mine," the Sultan said coldly. "And I would appreciate it if you did not interrupt our conversation."

"Of course," Dumbledore agreed quickly.

"So Harry, I understand that Ichiro gave you a rather impressive gift?"

"I suppose," Harry agreed. "He said it would be helpful in learning how to use the sword."

"I'm sure," Aliyy said with a smile. "And as he did it at my party, I can not allow him to upstage me." He gave a signal and one of the servants presented Harry with a jeweled bottle. "Treat her well, she is a bit strong willed and willful, but she has a good heart."

"Ok," a rather confused Harry agreed.

"Thank you Harry," the Sultan said with a smile. "Now if you will excuse me, I have something I must attend to personally."

"Goodbye Aliyy," Harry said to his friend.

"You never fail to amaze me Harry," Dumbledore said to himself. "Come Harry, we must be going."

They stepped outside and Dumbledore held out a portkey. Only moments before they disappeared, a dark shape detached itself from the shadows and took hold of the object.

"Who are you?" Dumbledore demanded after they arrived back in his office.

"I am Keiko," the dark shape replied. "Harry-sama's kunoichi."

"Ichiro's gift?"

"Yes."

"Harry," Dumbledore said with a twinkle in his eye. "Uncork that bottle."

Harry followed the Headmaster's instructions and nearly dropped the bottle nearly dropped it when pink smoke came out of it. And his jaw dropped when the smoke coalesced into an attractive young girl.

"What do you wish of me master?"

AN: Lot's of Harry gets a slave type stories, thought I'd have a bit of fun with the concept. Not sure if I'll write more of it, not too happy with the way I ended it.

Omake on how this would go . . .

"You have to tell her that this wasn't my fault," Harry demanded. "It wasn't even my idea."

"I'm sure Ms. Granger will understand," Dumbledore said with twinkling eyes.

"You don't know what she's like," Harry hissed. "You didn't have to go to any SPEW meetings."

"I understand that Ms. Granger is going to be a bit . . . put out when she finds out what happened. But . . ."

"So you is Harry Potter sir's servant?" Dobby asked in excitement.

"I am," the girl confirmed.

"Oh Dobby knew that Harry Potter sir was a great and powerful wizard," Dobby cheered. "Finally others is realising this."

"You wish to be his servent also?"

"Dobby's not worthy," the young elf cried. "Dobby's not worthy."

Disclaimer: Harry is going to do many dangerous things and while they may be fun, I wouldn't advise you to copy him. If you do and you get hurt, well . . . that's just social Darwinism. If you cause someone else to get hurt then I expect that you may have to pay numerous fines and or spend time in jail.

## **Better living through Chemistry Revised**

It all started with a book. Harry walked stiffly towards his relatives' house, Dudley and his 'friends' had been a bit . . . rougher then usual and Harry was having to take frequent breaks.

Leaning against a garbage can to catch his breath, something caught his eye. "What's this?" Harry pulled out a book and read the title. "*Better Living Through Chemistry?*" Well, I suppose my life can't get any worse." Harry carefully tucked the book in one of the pockets of his massive hand me down jacket and continued home.

It would be several hours before he had a chance to examine his find, after he'd been tossed into his cupboard. For the next few hours, Harry used the thin sliver of light that intruded through the cracks to digest the contents of the book. And with one little book, the world changed.

The first ones to notice Harry's new hobby were his aunt and uncle.

"What's this then?" Vernon demanded as he lifted Harry's prized book out of reach.

"Book on chemistry," Harry said quickly.

"Who'd you steal it from?" Vernon growled.

"No one," Harry replied. "I found it in the trash."

"Likely story," Vernon grunted. "Get into the cupboard."

"Yes uncle," Harry said in defeat.

Petunia waited until the boy had left before offering a comment. "Vernon I think . . . I think we should let him keep his hobby."

"What, why?" Vernon growled.

"Isn't science the opposite of . . .of . . . freakishness?" Petunia whispered, as if the conversation might summon one of 'them.'

"I suppose," Vernon grudgingly agreed.

"We've tried beating it out of him," Petunia whispered. "And that didn't work. I can't think of anything else."

"Might keep the little bastard off the dole when he gets older too. " Vernon mused," Anything that keeps another leach away from my taxes is a good thing in my book."

"Exactly," Petunia agreed.

"BOY," Vernon yelled. "Get out here now."

"Yes uncle," Harry said hesitantly.

"We've decided to let you keep your book," Vernon said magnanimously. "So long as you do your chores and a few extra."

"Thank you uncle," Harry replied.

Time passed and Harry's skill grew by leaps and bounds. Every spare moment was spent in a makeshift laboratory he had cobbled together in a corner of the garden shed or in the public library. Little Whinging's library didn't have much of a chemistry or science section, but it was connected to the British interlibrary loan system. Harry's ever increasing laundry list for journal articles, textbooks and dusty research tomes were godsend to bored librarians trying to justify their existence, thus nobody minded when Little Whinging began to borrow more chemistry books from the big libraries than all the rest of Surrey combined. Harry's other ally turned out to be Mr. Kertz, the science teacher at his school, who happily spend long hours after class explaining everything he knew about chemistry, which was plenty. The once promising, bright Oxford student, had to abandon his dream in science to make a living at this nowhere school, teaching students who couldn't care less. For him, Harry was the only one who ever shared his childhood passion.



Harry's first break came when a particular sturdy ant colony invaded aunt Petunia's roses. None of the available pesticides worked, or if they did, they took out the roses as well or left ugly residues on the leaves.

"Harry, can't you do something about these monster-ants? It is bad enough that we have to endure the foul smell from your lab all the time. Isn't it time that you try to do something useful?" Petunia yelled in anger and frustration.

"I'd like to try, Aunt Petunia, but I'd need a few chemicals for that – nothing expensive, but I can't really buy such things even if I had any money. You know, they wouldn't sell to anyone underage." Harry replied in his most innocent voice. His supplies so far had been refined household chemicals. For example, drain cleaner is mostly sodium hydroxide, but it has added color and odor to discourage drinking and enzymes to accelerate the solution of organic matter. This extra stuff tended to spoil Harry's experiments and required him to spend a lot of time on purification, incidentally teaching him a valuable skill that would help him a great deal in his future.

"Hmm... oh well. Make me a list and I'll talk with Vernon about it." Petunia said, knowing that she was grasping for straws here.

Harry on the other hand thought that he had licked the problem already and was just using this opportunity to advance some of his other projects. A week later and after receiving a few small glass jars containing red phosphor, ethylene oxide, ... and other things that no 9 year old should ever lay their hands on, Harry placed a few small cotton balls soaked with 3 drops of a thick, brown liquid near the roots of Petunia's roses and the ants were no more. That made him the hero in the Dursley household ... for about two seconds.

IIIIIIIIII

"Hey freak," Dudley yelled at his cousin, annoyed by Harry's success.

"What is it Dudley?" Harry asked with a sigh.

"Why don't you look at me when I talk to you," Dudley growled.

"You tell him Duds," one of Dudley's toadies cheered.

"I'm too busy to play with you at the moment Dudley," Harry said absently. "Why don't you go play with yourself."

"I said look at me when I talk to you," the large boy took a menacing step forward.

"I don't think you want to get any closer Dudley," Harry's voice hardened. "In fact, I don't think I want you anywhere near my glass. Some of these items took me forever to find."

"You can't tell me what to do," Dudley said belligerently. "I think it's time I showed you who's boss again. Boys, break his toys." Dudley said to the small gang of hangers on that surrounded him.

"Remember." Harry reached into his pocket and pulled out what appeared to be a bottle of nasal spray. "I warned you."

"Wha?" Dudley felt a split second of confusion before his world dissolved into pain.

"What did you do to him?"

"Formaldehyde," Harry said with a yawn. "I think you might want to flush his eyes out with this." Harry tossed a small bottle to the other boy. "I also think you might want to tell him to leave me alone from now on."

"Wait till I tell my parents," Dudley gasped.

"Thought you were more of a man than that Dudders," Harry laughed. "Then again you did bring a few friends with you to deal with little ol' me." Harry's voice hardened, "listen very carefully. If you do anything that causes damage to my laboratory, I'll do something very unpleasant to you. I don't care what else you do, I don't care if you act like your normal boorish self anywhere but here. If you threaten my lab in any way, well . . ." Harry waved his spray bottle in the blinded boy's direction. "you will regret it!"

|||||||

Things were looking up. Dudley kept his distance and Harry was not the least bit surprised that Petunia asked him for more favors. In return for less chores, more time in the lab and extra contraband, Harry developed better fertilizers, bug repellents, fungicides, weed killers, etc. His crowning achievement was a rose, with ultra bright, yellow petals, that won Petunia multiple awards at various gardening shows. Little did Petunia know that Harry had actually spliced a gene from the *Aequorea Victoria* jellyfish into her rose that produced yellow fluorescences, a feat that should have been impossible with the poor tools of Harry's lab.

The owner of Little Whinging's sole nursery did however become suspicious of Petunia's fortune. Not impressed by her claim to two green thumbs, he began to investigate.

"Harry, may I have a word with you?", said a middle aged man in a business suit as Harry was leaving the library.

"Why... well yes, if it doesn't take too long. I'm a bit late for dinner, you know." Harry replied while wondering what to make of the stranger with the fake smile.

"All right then, I can walk with you to Privet drive, if you don't mind." the stranger replied a little too prepared. "Oh, I'm sorry. How rude of me. I should have told you who I am first. I'm Art Short and I own Whinging Plantland. Your aunt is one of my more, ah, memorable customer, you see." Harry didn't, but that didn't stop Art.

Harry tried to read the man's face, but not having dealt with any business types in his life so far, Harry couldn't get much out of it.

"You see, we both know that your Aunt isn't a Gertrude Jekyll, but yet she impressed us all lately. I was wondering how until my dear friend Mr. Kertz told me a little about you."

Harry very much doubted that Mr. Kertz had any friends, let alone dear ones, but the connection made sense and Harry quickly figured out where Mr. Short was headed. While Mr. Short took his sweet time to get there, Harry was busy calculating how much was in it for him.

“... and so you see that my proposition could be very beneficial for both of us.” The sudden silence startled Harry. Evidently, he was supposed to say something.

“Ah, hmm,... so if I understood you correctly, you want me to give you my formulas in return for what amounts to the bus fare to London, . . . one way?” Inwardly, Harry smiled. He knew that he was good at this game. He didn't know why, but he came to trust his intuition about making deals. Petunia was hooked and, if he had liked her, he would have felt guilty of extortion. But now he realized that he had set his sights way too low. Mr. Short had connections and resources and besides, there were always other garden supply companies.

What followed was a very lopsided negotiation between a 9 year old and a seasoned entrepreneur, who ended up getting the short end of a huge deal. But I would take him years to figure this out. Mr. Short's new lines of HP gardening products took off like a rocket, but he always found himself missing some critical ingredient at a critical time that had to be bought from you-know-who for a pretty penny. Harry ended up with another lab, two assistants, several patents to his name, but assigned to Whinging Plantland and a nice bank account, none of which the Dursley's knew about.

Life was definitely looking up. Dudley wasn't an issue anymore. Petunia was eating out of his hand, school was a bit more fun and his chores consisted now entirely out of lab work. Only uncle Vernon resisted his move from the cupboard to the spare bedroom.

IIIIIIII

“Damn Yanks. Titantium nighty, harrumph. Why can't they make drills the way God meant them to be made.” grumbled Vernon, who was in an extremely foul mood. Ever since he came back from work, he would sulk and complain. Harry knew to keep a low profile at times like this, but his ears perked when Vernon mentioned a chemical. This was probably this first time ever, so he kept listening from a safe distance.

“BOY! Come here!” Vernon eventually yelled, so loud that the glasses in the cabinet rang.

This wasn't good. Not good at all. Harry took his time to get to the living room, his nasal spray at the ready in his pocket.

"Yes, uncle Vernon?" Harry whispered, trying to appear more intimidated than he actually felt.

"What do you know about this titantium nighty stuff?"

"You mean titanium nitrite? It is a very hard coating with good adhesion to steel that helps to prevent wear. Looks kind of goldish yellow and is pretty tough." Harry replied in a shy voice.

"Yes, that stuff. Its killing us! Grunnings is loosing a lot of business because we do not have a license to use it on our drills. You should try to invent something like that, instead of mucking with plant stuff all the time!" Petunia looked gravely wounded, but Harry found the problem intriguing. If he were to come up with something,...

"I will try to look into it, Uncle Vernon." Harry replied meekly.

It took Harry nearly two months to understand the problem and to come up with the outline to an sketch of a vague shadow of an hunch to an idea. There was a ton of literature on drills, steels, and coatings, but he knew that he needed something different. Drills are big business replete with many smart people with big labs and near infinite resources. What can an almost 10 year old do that hasn't been done before? But once Harry had an idea, he usually found a way to make the chemicals do what he wanted, if only he tried hard enough.

"U.. Uncle Vernon, do you have a moment?" Harry uttered one evening when he thought that his uncle was in a particular good mood.

"What is it, BOY?"

"I was thinking about your drill coating problem, but ... ah, but maybe you could make the drills out of a better material that wouldn't need to be coated? Have you considered Wootz steel? If you could process that into a Damascene steel drill, it could work, perhaps, maybe?"

"Bah humbug. Our scientist would have thought about that." said Uncle Vernon, dismissing Harry with an impolite gesture.

'Like hell they would' thought Harry on his way to the cupboard. It was a risky gamble. Vernon would mention this as his idea at work, and he would be roundly laughed out of the room. Nobody knew how to make Damascene steel for over 1300 years. That knowledge had died when the Indian mines ran out of the right ore to make Wootz steel. But Harry had an inkling that he may be able to do it. But for that, he needed a lot equipment and supplies...

"BOY! COME HERE! RIGHT NOW!" a purple Vernon shouted while nearly shattering the front door.

"Thought it was funny eh! Dr. Bofin nearly nearly had a heart attack from laughing too much when I mention your idiotic idea! Tried to make a fool out of ME! You'll see who had the last laugh here. You'll stay in the cupboard from now on. You hear me!", shouted a very irate Vernon.

So far so good, thought Harry, but now comes the hard part.

"But uncle Vernon, it can be done. I read it in this paper from a Russian scientist...", this was about as far as Harry got before seeing spinning stars from being slapped hard across the face. Harry retreated in pain to his cupboard, but he felt sure that the seed was planted. Now he had to wait. Vernon hated the Russians, and stealing their idea was just the thing that would appeal to him. Never mind that there is no such paper.

"Vernon,.. the boy, he is quite good with that science stuff, you know." whispered Petunia.

"But that woozzz, bah. It is complete nonsense. Can't be done!"

"but what if..."

The next morning saw a very quiet Vernon at the breakfast table. Nobody said a word. Even Dudley had the sense to keep his mouth, ...well full of food. Eventually, on his way out, Vernon asked Harry "What do you need?"

'YES!' thought Harry. Here comes phase III. If he had know how much labor it entailed, Harry probably would have never tried. But as it was, Harry had asked for access to the Grunnings laboratory. From May throughout summer, Harry's life became very intense. His day would start in the late evening with Vernon driving him to the Grunnings factory. He would work in the lab all night long while uncle Vernon would snore in his office. In the morning they would drive home. Harry would take a short break, and spend any spare minute outside of school in his lab or in the library. Often he would spend the entire weekend in the Grunnings lab, operating vacuum furnaces, melting steel, forging ingots, running tests, operating x-ray machines, cutting and polishing samples, looking at the screen of an electron microscope, and so on.

Harry was amazed that nobody caught them. Initially, He tried hard to cover his tracks, but eventually he didn't had time to change all the dials and switches back to the way they were. How could the Grunnings scientists not notice that their equipment was still warm in the morning? How could they not notice the metal filings on the floor? The dulled saw blades? The used crucibles? The missing raw materials?

Operating the bigger metal working machines was also hard physical labor: these things were designed for grown up men, not 10 year old kids. In the end, Harry had enough muscles to take on Dudley easily, if that were ever an issue.

June came and went. So did July. Three months of exceedingly intense mental and physical labor had their effect on Harry. But Harry was excited by the steady progress. At times he had the feeling that he could talk to the glowing steel, tell it what to do. Sense its composition. Feel its micro structure. This guided him towards his goal.

Uncle Vernon was about to give up. Truth be told, Harry was surprised that he lasted this long. Now he had only until the end of August. But then, three days before his time was up, he had it in his hand. At 4:33 in the morning, he held a 10mm drill in his had. At first glance, it looked just like an ordinary metal drill. Grey steel, shaped like a drill bit. But upon closer inspection, you could see a faint

pattern on its surface that followed the twist of the drill. Harry knew that these were zones enriched with carbon nano-tubes. They would resist wear and sharpen the bit during use. A carefully aligned matrix of steel grains, carbon nano-tubes, carbides, and various micro-crystals would all work together to preserve a sharp cutting edge. Harry felt the cold steel in his hand and he knew it would work as he expected it.

“Uncle Vernon,” he woke up his uncle, who had been snoring deeply on a folding bed in his office.

“Wha... what is it, boy? Did you break anything? I...” this was as far as Harry let him. Then he silently handed him the drill.

“This is it?” stuttered his uncle, puzzled if he was still dreaming.

They drove home silently. Harry went to sleep, at long last. He didn't bother to wake up until some 12 hours later.

The Dursley's were celebrating. The new drill exceeded all expectations. The Grunnings scientists couldn't believe their instruments. This drill was at least ten times more durable than the best titanium-nitrite coated drill bit on the market.

There was no “thank you” from Vernon. But Harry didn't expect one. He knew what was coming: phase IV. Vernon was hooked. Knowledge is power. His Uncle had no clue how to make these drills, only Harry did. He was about to rule Privet Drive #4. But things unfolded a little differently than Harry expected.

One pleasant late October afternoon, Harry found himself home alone after school when the doorbell rang.

“Hello Harry, may I come in?” said an elderly gentlemen through the half opened door.

“Sure, please do. Would you like some tea?” Harry found himself saying, which surprised him. He wasn't in the habit of letting in strangers. But somehow, this fellow seemed rather friendly. Like a grandfather bearing presents or Santa Clause.



"I'm Christian Grunnings," the old man explained after Harry had offered him a seat in the living room.

"and I'm very impressed with your work." continued the old man.

"What work? My uncle..." protested Harry

"Rubbish! Your uncle is all prawn, no brain. He has his uses, but he couldn't tell a door nail from a steel pin. Harry, do you really think that I don't know what happens in my factory, late at night, all summer long?" his warm, knowing smile needed no answer.

"Harry, you are a true genius. What you have done is pure magic. None of my scientists could have done this. I had ordered them to journal your progress. There are surveillance cameras in the lab, you know. They'd spend all day long figuring out what you did at night."

Harry was shocked. He hadn't expected this, yet he instantly knew that he should have.

"And yet, they could not figure it out. They still can't." continued Mr. Grunnings. "I'm sure you know that." He added with a sly smile.

"Harry, do you know how much your invention is worth?" Christian continued in a more serious tone.

"I don't know." replied Harry truthfully.

"I'd say many tens of millions, perhaps hundreds." said the man. Then he unexpectedly paused. His face suddenly filled with genuine sorrow.

"I lost my wife and son in a tragic gas explosion nine years ago. My son was a good kid, a scientist like you will be. You remind me a little of him." Harry noticed the faraway look on this man's face. "Please pardon the ramblings of an sentimental old man. But you should know, I have no real family anymore. My distant relatives want only my money and they can't wait 'til I'm gone."

The old man took a break and Harry noticed that he really did look old and lost right now. He could see the shadow of an entrepreneur, but

this man was very different from Mr. Short. Mr. Grunnings radiated honesty. Harry felt he could trust this man.

"I'd like to be your friend. Harry. I'd love if you could think of me a bit as if I were your godfather. And I would be here telling you this even if you had failed or if you were to sell your invention elsewhere."

Harry decided to trust this man. He had now a second, much larger bank account. Vernon had been instructed to treat Harry right and his life was looking great. No more second hand things. Dudley was occasionally allowed to carry Harry's briefcase to school for him.

Things once again fell into a predictable routine until a certain letter arrived . . .

"Thanks." Harry snatched the mail out of the post man's hands and quickly sorted through it. "Junk, junk, junk, junk, a letter with my name on it?" Harry spared it a glance before tossing it on the pile of junk mail. "Ah, here it is." Harry held it up in triumph. "My new industrial chemical supply catalog. I've been waiting weeks for this to arrive." Sure he couldn't officially buy anything in it, but nearly anything he'd like would appear in one of his labs. His assistants would take care of that.

"What's this, Harry?" Vernon's voice stopped Harry before he could escape to his lab.

"What?" Harry turned to look. "Oh that? Just some garbage."

"Be on your way then." Vernon had to fight to keep the pleased smile off his face. Looked like his years of hard scheming had paid off. Harry was hooked on science and his promotion and bonus...

Harry spent the rest of the day in his laboratory and woke up early the next day to finish an experiment he'd been working on. His uncle's bellow of anger caused him to look up a bit. But as the man was nowhere in sight, Harry concluded that the anger wasn't directed at him and turned back to his work.

The house was filled with letters when Harry woke up the next morning and his relatives found him standing in the sitting room looking at a the pile with an odd look on his face.

"Gather those up in a bag and put them on the curb," Vernon ordered.

"I'd rather not," Harry said absently.

"Why?" Vernon growled.

"I think I might be able to turn them into something useful," Harry said in the same absent tone. "And it'd be a shame to throw them out if that's true."

"Like what?"

"An artificial log maybe?" Harry mused. "Or fertilizer for the garden."

"Oh . . ." Vernon wasn't sure how to react to that.

IIIIIIIIII

"Well?" The Headmaster asked.

"He's getting them," Minerva replied with a frown. "Charms say that he even read one, but we still haven't gotten any response."

"Perhaps I should go and find out what's wrong," Dumbledore suggested. "I can't imagine why we haven't gotten a response."

"He was raised as a muggle," Minerva pointed out.

"True," Albus agreed. "No matter, I'll straighten things out myself. No need to worry about it any longer."

"Yes, Headmaster."

Dumbledore walked off school grounds and disappeared with a pop. He reappeared in front of the Dursley home and approached the door. Raising his hand, he knocked three times and fixed a smile on his face.

"You," Petunia said as she answered the door. "What do you want?"

"I'm just here to make sure that Harry gets this." Albus brandished the letter.

"He got it and doesn't want anything to do with you," Petunia spat. "Now go away."

"Why don't you let him tell me that," Albus said reasonably.

"Of course," Petunia said with a smirk. "He's in the garden shed behind the house."

"Thank you," Dumbledore said to the closing door. Whistling a happy tune, Dumbledore walked around the house and to the shed. "Is anyone in there?"

"Just a sec," a child's voice replied.

"Alright," Dumbledore agreed. He was pleased to note that Lilly's son hadn't seemed to pick up any of his Aunt's habits.

"What can I do for you?" A boy that could only be Harry asked.

"I've come to give you this," Albus said with a smile. "Your acceptance to Hogwarts."

"Does it have a chemistry department?" Harry asked bluntly.

"No."

"Physics?"

"I'm afraid not."

"Biology, mathematics, engineering, any of the sciences at all?" Harry demanded.

"It has magic," Dumbledore said with a smile.

"No thanks," Harry said with a poorly concealed frown. "I'd rather stay at my current school which has an excellent science curriculum."

"But . . . don't you want to learn magic?" Albus asked in shock. In all his time as Headmaster, he couldn't recall a single instance like this.

"It might be amusing, for parties perhaps." Harry allowed. "But why would I want to do that if I had to give up science? Besides, any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."

"But . . ." Albus was flabbergasted. "We have potions," He offered weakly.

"Uh huh." Harry seemed less then impressed.

"And I could teach you alchemy," Albus said desperately.

"Or I could stay here and learn real chemistry and other hard science," Harry countered. "Hmmm, I think I'll stay here."

"Why can't you study chemistry on your holidays?"

"Why couldn't I study magic during spring break?" Harry retorted. He sensed the headmaster's growing desperation. He didn't know why this Albus wanted him to attend Hogwarts so badly, but he instinctively felt his bargaining power. His life was good, but he was still underage, which meant being tied to the Dursleys.

"Because magic is so complex that . . ." Albus stopped when he noticed Harry's expanding grin. "I see."

"Unless I went to one of the intense study camps they have, I'd never keep up." Harry explained. "You can't expect me to give up my dream to learn a few parlor tricks, now can you?"

"Tell me about these camps," Albus demanded.

"They take place at various places around the world," Harry began. "They're fairly intense, *and they also require my Guardians permission to attend.*" this later part was really Harry's current problem. The Dursley's wouldn't let him go, weary about losing the goose that lays the golden eggs.

"What if I were to arrange for you to attend these camps?" Albus asked. "Then would you be willing to attend Hogwarts?"

"Maybe," Harry said slowly, sensing leverage. "But only if I could have a place for my laboratory and plenty of time to use it. And I have time off to attend conferences and seminars..."

"Agreed," Albus said quickly, too quickly. "It's a deal then."

"With the understanding that I leave if it isn't kept," Harry said firmly. Years of living with the Dursleys had taught him to be suspicious of people's word.

"Of course," Albus replied. "Now if you're not too busy, why don't we go buy your school supplies."

"How long will it take?" Harry asked. "And for that matter, is there any reason I need to come back?"

"Shouldn't take too long," Albus said slowly. "But why wouldn't you want to come back? This is your home isn't it?"

"It's just a place I sleep," Harry said with a shrug. "Well?"

"I suppose you could take a room at the Leaky Cauldron," Albus replied. He did not like the the thoughts that Harry's statement dredged up.

"Good," Harry said with a smile. "Help me pack up my labs."

"Labs? How many labs do you have?", Albus puzzled

"Three, this one, the one at Grunnings and one at Plantland, oh and my library of cause.", Harry answered casually. "I don't need to move them all, you see I consult for them and it is convenient to have a ready lab when I show up. But I rented some storage space for a few items I acquired to put into my new lab."

"like what?" Albus puzzled.

"Nothing much really. Let's see, there is this surplus cyclotron to make isotopes, an ovenized gas chromatograph, various chemical reactors, a few vacuum distillation columns, a pressurized Czochralski crystal growing furnace with radio frequency heater, some glove boxes, a ball mill, a few furnaces, an evaporator, a few PCR machines, electrophoresis equipment, some microscopes, and miscellaneous supplies and glassware. About 2500 square feet of lab space would do nicely to begin with." Harry replied casually. He enjoyed seeing the shock on the headmaster's face and was wondering just how much space he could actually wring out of him.

Albus entered the shed and was flabbergasted to find a first-class well equipped chemical lab, with several computers and a dozen machines he didn't recognize.

"Would shrinking hurt it?"

"Some of it maybe," Harry agreed. "And most of it is quite fragile."

"I'll be careful," Albus promised.

"Be especially careful with the chemicals," Harry said quickly. "Most of them can be quite dangerous."

"Where did you get them if they're dangerous?" Albus asked in confusion, he'd heard the the muggle world was even more restrictive than the magic.

"I have my ways." answered Harry evasively.

"I see," Albus said thoughtfully, wondering how he could transport two truckloads to Hogwarts.

"Ready," Harry said suddenly. "If you can use magic to pack all that, otherwise I'll need a bit more time."

"Easily done," Albus replied. Albus waved his wand and accomplished the task, privately he was a bit disappointed by the boy's lack of reaction.

"Ok, let's go."

"What about your things in the house?"

"Every thing I care about is in my labs," Harry replied. "Let's go."

"Wouldn't you like to say goodbye to your relatives?"

"No."

"Alright then," Albus said slowly. "Just touch this sock and we will be on our way."

"I'm gonna have to get some more physics books," Harry muttered to himself. "A lot of physics books."

"What was that Mr. Potter?"

"What now?"

"Now we buy your wand and books," Dumbledore replied.

"Ok, but first we need to drop by Waterstone's, Piccadilly and Blackwell's, Charing Cross road." Harry said bluntly.

Albus was again shocked to find out that Harry had standing open accounts with both Bookshops. The staff at both shops seemed to give Harry the royal treatment and no one was the least bit surprised when Harry proceeded to clean out multiple shelves full of expensive textbooks.

"I think I got what I needed for now, I can mail order the rest later," noted Harry.

Arriving in Diagon Alley, Harry again failed to be impressed.

"We should get some money," Dumbledore said with a smile. "You have a whole vault full of it."

"Really? That's pretty silly. Why didn't anyone invest it properly. Besides why bother visit a bank? Don't you have electronic funds transfer? Eurocheques? Purchase orders? I could use one of my credit cards." replied Harry



"Well, how shall I put it, the magical world prefers some more traditional methods of payment." Dumbledore replied with an audible sigh. This is not going his way at all.

"If you say so," Harry agreed reluctantly. Harry followed the Headmaster lead to Gringotts. "Name?" the counter Goblin ask in an unfriendly tone.

"Harry Potter." Harry replied evenly.

"Oh, I'm so sorry Mr. Potter, how may I help you? Would you like to discuss your business in the manager's office?" the Goblin replied in a completely different tone. Again, Albus couldn't help but being surprised. What did the Goblins know about Harry that he didn't? A lot as it turned out. Harry's estimated net worth, not including his vault, was way north of 7 digits and rising fast. An eleven year old kid that manages to acquire such fortune on his own inspired awe among Goblins.

"So," Dumbledore began. "Where do you want to go first? To get your wand perhaps?"

"Is there an alchemy supply store near here?" Harry asked with a yawn.

"I don't believe so," Dumbledore said slowly.

"What about a potions supply store?" Harry persisted. "A place where I can check out lab ware?"

"That there is," Dumbledore replied.

"Let's go there," Harry suggested.

"If that is your wish young Potter," Dumbledore agreed. Dumbledore led Harry to a small shop and motioned the boy inside.

"Cauldrons?" Harry said in shock. "You people still use Cauldrons? What century do you folks live in?"

"Yes we do," the shopkeep said with a nod. "Muggle born?"

"Half blood, muggle raised." Dumbledore replied.

"What does that mean?" Harry demanded.

"Muggle is a term for a non magical person, your mother was from a non magic family and your father was a pure blood. Hence the term half blood." Dumbledore explained. "Muggle raised because you were raised by your non magical relatives."

"Any tangible advantage to being from a magical family?" Harry asked quickly. "I mean genetics not the fact that they are raised in a magical environment."

"No there is not," Dumbledore said quickly.

"I see . . ."

"Are you going to buy something or are you going to take up space all day?" The shopkeep said with a grin.

"Is there any difference in performance between the various types of metal used in the cauldrons?" Harry demanded.

"Some potions can only be brewed with some types of metal," the shopkeep explained. "And some metals last longer in some circumstances."

"Give me one of each of them," Harry said quickly. "I'd also like to get a look at your glass."

"Glass?"

"You don't use glass in potion making?" Harry asked in horror.

"Some," the shopkeep admitted. "But not many due to the heat involved. Mostly it's just used to hold completed potions."

"Since when can metal withstand heat better than glass or ceramics? Oh well, let me see one of your containers," Harry sighed.

"Here." The man placed a small vial on the counter.

"Ah," Harry commented as he examined the vial. "Rather poor quality. I see why you don't use it much."

"You've got better?"

"Much better," Harry said quickly. "Headmaster, would you mind unshrinking some of my glass?"

"I'd be delighted to help Harry," Dumbledore agreed.

"This looks like a common bottle," the shopkeep examined one of Harry's most useful pieces of equipment.

"It is Pyrex," Harry replied. "inert to most chemicals, low thermal expansion coefficient, does not shatter easily, is easy to clean and doesn't mind thermal gradients. Besides it has standardized precision flanges, makes vacuum tight connections and does not outgas. It has a flat transmission spectrum until the near IR and is compatible with simple extinction meters. Tends to reduce defervescence and if you do manage to break it, the shards are mostly dull."

"Could you get more of these?" The shopkeep asked as he looked in fascination at one of Harry's precious beakers.

"Easily, why?"

"Because if you can then I'll pay handsomely for them," the shopkeep said. "Even more handsomely if you'll take store credit."

"Agreed," Harry said quickly. "Do you take custom orders?"

"What did you have in mind?"

"I'd like a small leather satchel that is larger on the inside than the outside," Harry began. "It'll need to be large enough to contain every bit of your best equipment and a full inventory of ingredients."

"Shouldn't be too hard," the shopkeep mused. "Leather merchant owes me a few favors. I presume that you want me to stock it for you?"

"With everything you have," Harry agreed.

"Might be a good idea to add a reference library too," the shopkeep suggested. "If you'll let me market this, I'd be willing to give you a percentage."

"I think it would be a good idea Harry," Dumbledore reentered the conversation.

"Alright sir," Harry agreed.

"How does ten percent sound?" The Shopkeep asked.

"That's fine," Harry said carelessly. He knew he could get much more but wasn't in the mood to bargain.

"Good," the shopkeeper agreed. "This may not sound . . . well, let me restate that. I doubt sales will be as good if it's known that a first year Hogwarts student came up with the idea. Would you be willing to adopt an alias?"

"Sure," Harry agreed. "How about Newton?"

"First or last name?"

"Last name," Harry said. "H.P. Newton."

"Very good Mr?"

"Potter," Harry said.

"Harry Potter?"

"Yes."

"Might have been best to keep your name after all," the shopkeeper said with a laugh. "No matter, our invented man will do well enough."

"When will this all be ready?"

"Shouldn't be more then a day or two."

"Good." Harry paused to think about something. "Do you know where I could get a good lab coat?"

"Lab coat?"

"You know," Harry encouraged. "A white jacket that you wear to protect your clothing from spills?"

"I've never heard of such a thing," the shopkeeper admitted.

"Headmaster," Harry said. "Could you enlarge one of my catalogs?"

"Here you are Harry," the Headmaster handed Harry the lab supply catalogs.

"Just a sec." Harry flipped through the tome for several seconds. "Here, page 2156, this is a lab coat."

"I might have a few ideas for improvements," the shopkeeper said. "Mind if I talk with Madame Malkin before we go any further on this project?"

"Sure," Harry agreed with a shrug.

"Excellent, it looks like Mr. Newton may soon have another invention to his credit." The shopkeeper rubbed his hands together as he thought about his future profits. "Any other ideas?"

"Goggles, eyewash, uh . . . maybe you should just flip through the catalog."

"Thank you," the shopkeep said as he began flipping through the catalog. "Mr. Potter, I believe that it will be quite some time before we have to worry about a drop in profit potential if you can get me even half of these items."

"Good then. I can easily get any item in that catalog and more."

"Will you be some place where I can reach you in the next few days?"

"Mr. Potter is intending to take rooms at the Leaky Cauldron," Dumbledore said quickly.

"How about I meet you there in a day or so," the shopkeeper suggested. "I'll have Tom tell you when."

"That's fine uh . . ."

"Never gave you my name did I?" The shopkeeper asked. "It's Fred Abel."

"Then I'll see you soon Mr. Abel," Harry said.

"Call me Fred Mr. Potter."

"Harry."

"Harry it is then."

"Goodbye Fred," Harry called out over his shoulder as he left the store.

"Where to now Harry?" Dumbledore asked. "Would you like to get your wand now?"

"I'd like to get some books," Harry replied.

"Flourish & Blotts is right over there," Dumbledore sighed.

"Let's go then," Harry demanded.

"As you wish." Dumbledore followed Harry into the store and quickly steered the boy towards the sets of first year texts. "I believe this is what's required for your first year."

"Good," Harry said. "You get a set of those and I'll get a few others to read before school starts." Before Dumbledore could make his reply, Harry disappeared into the stacks.

"This isn't quite how I expected things to go," Dumbledore sighed.

Harry quickly found the store's pitiful section on alchemy and was happily flipping through one of the books when a young girl approached him.

"Hello," the girl said. "Are you starting your first year too?"

"Yeah," Harry said absently.

"That's wonderful," the girl said. "My name is Hermione Granger and I'm the first witch in my family, are you the first magical person in your family."

"No," Harry said without taking his eyes off the book. "But I wasn't raised around magic."

"Do you think we'll have a hard time fitting in?" Hermione asked with a worried frown. "I've been worried that I won't fit in so I've been studying everything I could. I came here today to get more books, my parents said I could get a few and I was just trying to figure out what to get. Do you have any ideas?"

"This one seems rather good." Harry held up the book so she could read the title.

"Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakarīya al-Rāzi?" Hermione read the author's name aloud.

"Many think he's the one that discovered Sulfuric Acid and the process to distill ethanol," Harry added.

"Oh," Hermione examined the book with greater interest. "Are there two of them?"

"Here." Harry handed the girl another copy.

"Thanks, I . . ." Hermione stopped when she noticed an older woman waving at her. "My mother's calling me, I have to go now."

"Fine," Harry said as he turned back to his book.

Eventually, Dumbledore managed to pull Harry away from his books to continue the shopping trip. Much to the old man's dismay, Harry insisted on getting every other item before they finally drifted into the wand shop.

Mr Olivander measured Harry and began to try out one wand after another with ever increasing havoc and mayhem. Fresh out of his wits, Mr Olivander finally opened a shipment of wands from abroad, obviously with great misgivings. "Carbon fiber in epoxy resin, laser drilled, 21.67cm, magically stabilized Bose-Einstein condensate core." Olivander read from the box with a face as if he were eating life worms.

Harry was happy to hear his kind of jargon and eagerly picked up the black wand. This wand wasn't just black, rather it was as if it was simply a cylindrical back hole in space. No light reflected off its surface, absolutely none. However the moment Harry's finger touched the surface, it sprang to life: tiny luminescent purple veins began to appear on its surface, forming an intricate, moving, organic patterns. Soon they were extending beyond the wand, like Saint Elmo's fire. Harry could feel power building up. His hair began to stand up and the air around him began to crackle with faint discharges. Slowly the discharges grew stronger and stronger until a purple beam emerged from the tip of this wand.

"Cool, a star wars light saber!", said Harry, not noticing the scared look on Mr. Olivander's face.

"Peculiar, most peculiar, Mr. Potter", Olivander said quietly. "This is an experimental wand made by a rather crazy wizard at the Massachusetts institute of magic technology. Nobody had been able to touch it before you. It has the unfortunate tendency to extract magic from the environment and everything it touches to store it in its core. Normal wands just focus magic, but this one is supposed to accumulate magic that can be used later. Very powerful in theory, but also quite dangerous and untested."

Harry clearly felt that Mr. Olivander was happy to see them leave and even happier to get rid of the alien wand. On the other hand, if the MIMT is anything like the MIT, then he could expect a lot from his wand.

Next, Harry was fed an odd but nice meal and bundled off to bed in Tom's best room.



Fred the shopkeeper was waiting when Harry walked down to breakfast the next morning.

"Morning Fred," Harry yawned.

"Ah Harry," Fred began. "I have something to show you."

"What is it?"

"The prototype of the new lab coat," Fred said. "Madame Malkin was so intrigued by the idea that she worked through the night to make a prototype."

"Oh?"

"I've asked Tom for a private booth so we can discuss it," Fred continued. "Make your order and join me there will you?"

"Sure," Harry agreed. Harry quickly made his order and rejoined his new business partner.

"Take a look at this." Fred laid what appeared to be a standard lab coat on the table. "We took a muggle idea and used magic to make it as good as possible. It's as resistant to damage as we can make it, it has several self repairing charms, and the pockets are much deeper than they appear to be."

"My goggles?"

"They can see heat and cold, have a bubble headed charm, etc." Fred said with a yawn.

"Great, thanks."

"No problem," Fred said with a wave. "Most of the things went in here to prove that they could work together. Our production models will be much less extensive."

"Ok," Harry agreed. "Is everything else ready?"

"It'll be a few more days," Fred replied. "I'll have everything delivered to you at Hogwarts if there are any delays."

"Great."

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Tom led Harry through the floo to the Platform personally on the first day of school. The old man had said that it was the least he could do for 'the-boy-who-lived', whatever that was supposed to mean, and Harry found himself a seat on the train.

Harry had pulled out a new textbook and was just starting to understand a concept that had eluded on a previous reading when the door to the compartment opened.

"Uh . . ." Ron took one look at the boy with his nose in a book. "I'll find somewhere else to sit." Harry didn't even bother grunting in reply.

The next distraction came with the bushy headed girl he'd met in the bookstore. "Hello again," Hermione said. "It's nice to see someone I know on the train. You haven't seen a toad have you? Because a boy named Neville is looking for his pet toad that got loose and is now hopping around the train and I agreed to help him look for it. What book are you reading?"

"A brief history of time," Harry replied. "And no, I haven't seen a toad."

"Ok," Hermione said. "I'll keep looking then. See you later."

"Later."

Ten minutes later, a blond boy with two friends who looked like Dudley's minions suddenly opened the door with a loud bang.

"They were saying that Harry Potter is on this train. That wouldn't happen to be you?" drawled the blond.

Harry took his time to finish reading a paragraph before looking up at the intruders.

"Who wants to know?" replied Harry in a quiet but firm voice.

"I'm Draco, Draco Malfoy. And these are Crabbe and Goyle." said Draco, trying to regain his train of thought, which had derailed when Harry failed to be impressed by his grand entrance. He then launched into a speech on his glorious ancestry and family connections.

"... and so you see that some wizarding families are better than others. Hey, are you listening to me? What are you reading there anyway? Isn't that some muggle trash?"

Harry just ignored him and continued reading, which enraged Draco even further. Malfoy angrily stepped forward, intending to rip the book out of Harry's hands. However he managed only one step before slipping and falling in a most undignified and painful manner. Crabbe and Goyle's attempts to righten their fallen leader resulted in a series of awesome pratfalls, a spectacle fit to shame most slapstick movies.

"I'll get you for this, Potter!" spat Draco as the bruised trio retreated.

"What did you do to them?" asked Hermione, who had heard the commotion and was about to enter the compartment.

"Nothing really, I just spilled a few drops of Fullerene suspended in a silicon oil on the floor. C60 Bucky balls, you know. That combination has an amazingly low friction coefficient." Harry replied while he was spraying something else on the floor. "It is safe to walk now."

IIIIIIII

Harry rode the train the remainder of the way to Hogwarts and allowed himself to be dragged along with the group to the sorting, his nose still buried firmly in the book.

"Potter, Harry." McGonagall called out and the hall went silent.  
"Potter, Harry . . . POTTER, HARRY."

"Hmmm?" Harry looked up from his book, "what do you need."

"Go sit on the chair and put on the hat," McGonagall ordered.

"Alright," Harry agreed. The hat was on his head for less than a second when Harry returned to his book.

"Hmmm," the hat mused. "a very interesting read. Do you really think that dimensions could freeze out? and what is so special about 4D space over 11D space?..." pretty soon the hat and Harry were pondering symmetry violations and were well on their way towards string theory when the Headmaster rudely interrupted their chat by donning the hat himself. Moments later the hat was placed back on Harry's head.

"I'd like to continue our conversation some time," said the hat "but regrettable they insist that I sort you now. Hmm... not a bad mind, cunning too, you would thrive in Slytherin, but they hate geeks. Geek?? Well that starts with a 'G' so it better be ... GRYFFINDOR." The hall erupted into cheers . . . which trailed off after the students noticed that Harry hadn't made a move to get out of the chair.

"Take your seat Mr. Potter," McGonagall said calmly. "Take your seat Mr. Potter," she said a bit louder. "TAKE YOUR SEAT MR. POTTER," she yelled.

"Where?" Harry looked up with a bewildered expression.

"At that table over there." McGonagall indicated her house's table. "Got the looks from James," McGonagall muttered. "But I'll be damned if that isn't Lilly's boy."

IIIIIIII

Harry's first week of school was rather eventful. First, Harry set out to see Dumbledore.

"You promised me a decent laboratory! These facilities here are utter crap. There is no electricity, no fume hoods, no gas supply, dreadful lighting, no vacuum, no compressed air or cooling water. The rooms are filthy, badly ventilated and lack air conditioning. There is no network connection, no phone and even my portable computer is acting up. If you don't hold up your end of this bargain, I'm out of this filthy dump." an irate Harry yelled at the headmaster, who was cringing in his seat.

"Harry, please give me one more week to fix this." pleaded Albus, knowing full well that it would require a miracle to do all that within

just one week. He needed to remodel the entire Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw dungeons, build a shed for a 2 Megawatt generator plus tanks for diesel fuel, add magical shielding to protect the finicky muggle equipment, transport over a dozen truckloads of muggle things, run miles of phone cable through the forbidden forest, and he needed an army of muggle contractors because no wizard had any clue how to install electrical lighting and all the other stuff Harry demanded. Harry's cyclotron turned out to be a 25 ton iron and steel behemoth for which they had to cut holes into the castle walls to move into place, plus it needed 6 feet thick concrete walls for shielding the radiation when turned on. The muggles had to be obliviated afterwards and his budget was severely strained. On top of it all, if the ministry were to find out, he would be in a world of hurt. This boy was very high maintenance and he wondered more than once if it wouldn't be easier to just tackle Voldemort himself instead.

"All right, but only if you add a closed cycle liquid helium system for my new superconducting mass spectrometer." replied Harry, upping the ante yet again. On the other hand, having access to a high resolution mass spec would be a godsend to sort out all that organic gunk in the potion ingredients. There were so many organic compounds in there that Harry couldn't help but wonder if all of it was really necessary.

"How much space would that need?" asked a resigned Headmaster.

"Not much really, say 200 square feet." replied Harry, purposefully neglecting to mention that a helium chiller is about as silent as a machine gun and that it needed quite a bit more space for the helium storage tanks, which were technically not part of the chiller.

"OK, but this is really the last addition. No more. Do you understand?"

"Yes, of course, headmaster." replied Harry, thinking 'fat chance'.

While Dumbledore had the order of the phoenix working overtime. Harry leisurely began school. First came his Transfiguration class . . .

"What are you doing Mr. Potter?" McGonagall sighed.

"Checking the weight of the matchstick," Harry mumbled. "And comparing it to the needle you transfigured. Hmmm . . . weight is the same, I wonder if it's just gotten denser? Professor, could you transfigure another matchstick but stop half way this time?"

"Why don't you do it yourself?" McGonagall asked quickly, "that way you could have several at all stages if you gain enough skill."

"Right," Harry agreed. McGonagall watched in shock as the young boy transfigured several matches into needles. "Having trouble getting it to stay in the half done state," Harry said with a frown. "Could you offer a hint Professor."

"Five points to . . . " McGonagall started say before she caught herself. "Just . . . stop half way through."

"Uh . . . ok?"

IIIIIIII

Potions class also proved to be eventful . . .

Daphne growled, she had woken up late and by the time she got to her first Potions class everyone had paired up except one of the Gryffs. Why oh why was she being punished so?

"Move over," she growled at her new partner.

"Hmm?" Harry glanced over at her, "who are you?"

"Daphne Greengrass," she said with a smirk waiting for the stupid boy to recoil in horror . . . any moment now.

"Oh," Harry said with a blink. "Have a seat." With that the boy went back to his book, leaving his new partner in a state of confusion.

Professor Severus Snape entered and gave his usual first year speech.

"Ah yes, Harry Potter. Our new – *celebrity*." Snape uttered in his most malicious voice, starring into Harry's eyes, ... which continued to read a textbook.

"POTTER!! What would I get if I added powdered root of asphodel to an infusion of wormwood?"

"Draught of Living Death, Sir, although vacuum extraction via ethanol at 30C would work much better on wormwood than infusion. Besides, one should seek to isolate the active ingredient..."

"Where would I find a bezoar?" barked Snape

"Inside the stomach of an unfortunate goat, who had swallowed some basaltic rock. The stomach acids then etch the rock to increase its surface area, which can subsequently absorb hydrophilic poisons. Although activated charcoal would work better, Sir"

"What is the difference between monkshood and wolfsbane?" shouted Snape, whose face now matched Vernon's finest purple.

"None, it is also called Aconite, Blue Rocket, Friar's Cap, and Auld Wife's Huid, Sir. The name Wolfsbane tends to be used by wizards in South Wales, where the hardy perennial plant prefers well dug moist soil in shady places. Yields 0.3 to 1 Aconitine - crystalline, acrid and highly toxic - with the alkaloids Benzaconine, Picraconitine, and Aconine..."

"Oh, shut up." snapped Snape, feeling not too well right now. His plot foiled, Snape wrote a recipe for a hair coloring potion on the board and stalked over to his desk to sulk. It was one of his favorites: a vile potion more prone to induce vomiting than hair color change, finicky to brew and even subtle mistake could result in amusing effects on the unlucky students testing their potions. Snape tried to find comfort in the image of a green haired Potter on his way to the infirmary to stop his nose hair from growing uncontrollably.

"I wouldn't do that if I were you," Harry said to his new partner.

"Why now?" Daphne challenged.

"Because if you add that now it will explode and shower us with burning liquid," Harry replied. "Somehow I doubt you'd like to experience."

"Oh," the girl said in a small voice.

"Here." Harry spent a few moments arranging the girl's ingredients. "I've put them in order, first pile goes in first and so on. Feel free to ask if you need any more help."

"Ok." Daphne spent the rest of the class period brewing her potion and shooting curious glances at the boy sitting next to her.

Harry meanwhile continued looking at the recipe and flipping through his reference books. Nearly an hour went by while Harry did nothing but scribbling formulas into his lab-book using a multi-colored ball-point pen.

Snape's spirits rose considerably when he realized that it was now impossible for Harry to finish brewing the assigned potion in the remaining time. So he wasn't particularly concerned when Harry fetched his portable table-top reactor from his leather satchel, and began dialing in process parameters.

The reactor, a maze of glass tubes, heaters, stirrers, condensing columns, and automatic metering valves sprang to life with a faint buzzing noise and colored numbers began scrolling across a small window. Harry added minuscule amounts of various chemicals and processed magical ingredients from his supplies, oblivious to the fact that the class was now silent enough to hear a pin drop.

Professor Snape was hovering in front of Harry, face contorted in anger and ready to explode any second. Then a bell rang in Harry's reactor and Harry removed a very small vial filled with a crystal clear liquid from the machine and capped it carefully.

"What is the meaning of this, Potter? How dare you play with your silly toys in my lecture. I'll have you expelled for this insubordination!" Snape growled happily.



"I didn't play, Sir! I synthesized the potion you assigned." Harry protested and handed over the vial.

"Ha! The potion is supposed to be dark green, not clear. And you need at least 5 full table spoons to have any effect. You were supposed to brew a quart, not just 10 drops. And it is supposed smell like fish." a triumphant Snape replied. Then he uncapped Harry's vial, held it to his massive nose and took one deep breath before Harry could voice any warning.

"I wouldn't have done that, Sir. This potion looks clear because it is the purified essence of the recipe you gave us. It is far more concentrated and potent. I figure that only a few micrograms are needed and, given its high vapor pressure, you probably inhaled that much right now." replied Harry.

Snape quickly capped the vial, but it was too late. His black, oily hair had turned into flowing golden locks that seemed to be pure silk. All the girls gasped in envy while the boys turned purple from trying to hold their laughs.

"Class dismissed! All out NOW!", barked Snape, too shaken to even hand out detention.

Harry shrugged, calmly packed up his equipment and left the dungeon, where he found himself surrounded with girls asking about different colors, curling options, etc. Later that evening, he called Fred Able in Diagon Alley, who had gotten a telephone upon Harry's insistence.

"Hi Fred, what do you think about adding a line of H.P. Newton hair care products..."

IIIIIIII

Next was Prof. Flitwick's charms class. Hermione had just shown Ron how to successfully levitate a feather when Harry began to wonder if or how momentum was conserved. If it was conserved, he reasoned, he might be able to feel it as a force on the wand. The only problem was that the feather is so light that he probably would not feel anything either way. Then it occurred to him that Fma, so if the mass

is too small, how about increasing the acceleration a bit? Harry didn't think any further and tested his theory. Moments later, the class was disrupted by a loud bang when Harry's feather broke the sound barrier on its way to embed itself deeply into the ceiling.

"What did you do?" ask a concerned Prof. Flitwick.

"Oh, ... sorry about that, Sir. I just tried to see if I could feel any recoil in my wand if I were to accelerate the feather a bit harder."

"And did you?"

"No, actually. May I have another feather? Perhaps I can feel it if I make it go faster."

In his entire teaching career, professor Flitwick had never seen any student push a feather hard enough to penetrate flagstone.

"Ah, no Mr. Potter, I'd rather prefer you try to practice control, make it hover. Things like that..."

"All right." replied Harry in a bored voice, thinking about a paper that had described an experiment that used an accelerator to shoot a carbon disk at a stationary graphite target resulting in the formation of diamonds...

The flying lesson was a bit boring too. Neville had lost control over his broom and was escorted to the infirmary when Malfoy grabbed Neville's rememberall and tried to take off with it. Harry didn't feel like getting involved in feuds that don't concern him, but he disliked the git intensely. So he sprayed a little of his super-lubricant on Malfoy's broom. Malfoy promptly slid off his broom, landed ungracefully on his behind while his broom flew off over the forbidden forest. Harry quickly picked up the rememberall from one dazed Draco.

Harry really liked flying, but not on broom sticks. Like so many things magical, it seemed to him that wizards often discovered some really interesting effect, but then never bothered to understand it or to refine the effect beyond its first embodiment. So understanding the actual nature of brooms became one of his side-projects. However, as it

was more of a physics kind of thing, it ended up in his low priority queue.

Defense against the dark arts class was literally a headache for Harry. For some reason, his head would start to hurt whenever he was near Prof. Quirrell. The class itself was not too interesting either. Harry found that they spend entirely too much time on dealing with minor irritations, like Doxys and other magical vermin. He read about the dangers of dark spells in books, but he was far from convinced that this class taught him any skills to defend himself effectively.

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In the weeks after the first potions class, Daphne began spending quite a bit of time around Harry. This of course confused the boy terribly but he eventually broke down and showed her his laboratory that the Headmaster had finally managed to complete.

"Time to eat Harry," Daphne said.

"In a minute," Harry said absently.

"You said that ten minutes ago," Daphne whined. "It's time to go now."

"Alright," Harry sighed. He'd learned that there was only so far he could go before things started getting unpleasant. "Let's go."

The two children were walking down the hall to the great hall when Daphne froze. "Harry, be very quiet and don't make any sudden moves."

"Why?"

"Because there is a large Troll in the hallway ahead of us," Daphne replied. "Slowly, very slowly. Let's just slide into this room and hope he goes away."

"But that's the girl's toilet," Harry protested.

"It'll be ok to go in this once," Daphne hissed. "Now come on."

"Fine," Harry agreed with a sigh. The two children went into the bathroom and quickly discovered that they weren't alone.

"Granger?" Daphne said in shock. "What are you doing here?"

"Why are you crying?" Harry asked.

"Because I don't have any friends," Hermione sobbed. "No one likes me. They say I'm just a know it all."

"We'll be your friends," Harry offered.

Daphne frowned for a moment upon hearing Harry's pronouncement. Friends with a mudblood? Although . . . she did have the highest grades in the year and was second only to Harry when it came to potions. "That's right," she agreed. "We will."

"Thank you," Hermione said great fully. "I . . ." Anything more the girl might have said cut off when the door burst open to reveal one angry troll.

"That's right the troll," Harry said with a nod. "Forgot about that."

"You forgot about the Troll?" Daphne screamed in exasperation.

"Didn't seem important," Harry replied with a shrug.

"Not important? Bloody thing's gonna kill us and you don't think it's important?"

Harry reached into his pocket and pulled out a bottle of nasal spray and gave the Troll a squirt to the face when it got too close. The girls watched in shock as the troll began bellowing in pain and clutching it's eyes. "No," Harry agreed. "I don't think it's important."

"What did you do to it?" Hermione forced herself to ask.

"Formaldehyde," Harry explained. "Easy to get and it's more painful then capsaicin when you get it in the eyes."

"Isn't that what they use on dead people?" Hermione asked.

"Yep," Harry agreed.

Daphne watched in shock as the other two students held a normal conversation only a few feet away from a screaming troll. "What have I gotten myself into?" The girl muttered to herself.

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Harry was hardly surprised that a few weeks after the broom lesson incident, he found himself cornered in a deserted hallway by Malfoy, Crabbe and Goyle, who had their wands out.

"Potter, it is payback time!" drawled Draco in his most menacing voice, while playing with his wand as if trying to decide where to hex Harry first.

"Oh, really? I'm so scared." replied Harry while raising his hands away from his pocket. That confused Draco a little, who had expected Harry to reach for his wand. He did not notice that Harry had bend his left hand just when his arm was pointing at Draco's face.

"Yeah? Well you better should be!"

Sensing no danger, Draco spend the next minutes taunting his would be victim when suddenly he was interrupted by an angry snapping noise that was homing in on the trio fast. Draco couldn't believe his eyes when he saw the source of the noise: a huge, bright red shark was approaching him, swimming through air as if it was his native habitat. Draco fled in panic with the shark in hot pursuit. Snape, who must have been lurking nearby, tried a few spells to dispose of the shark, but he found that he couldn't do anything but conjure a strong metal cage around his students to protect them from one angry red shark, a giant purple octopus with yellow spots and a barrage of falling, fluorescent green apples that were larger than beach balls. For the next 2 hours, a plethora of strange, menacing creatures appeared, all in very bright saturated colors and all fiercely determined to eat Draco and his friends. The steel cage had to be reinforced frequently as it tended to melt away, as did the nearby walls. Pretty soon, Snape was sporting two extra pairs of arms and his robes had changed into a pink leather body glove. First Snape, then Prof. Flitwick and one by one all Hogwarts Professors were

busily trying to end the bizarre chaos. In the end, they had to settle for an uneasy stalemate to prevent bodily harm while the rest of the student body had a great time watching the battle of the absurd. All except for Fred and George Weasley, who looked rather distraught.

Once the mayhem finally subsided, Harry found himself in the Headmaster's office, with Profs. Snape and McGonagall.

"I demand that Harry is expelled for attacking my students!" fumed Snape.

"I attacked nobody!" protested Harry.

"Ha!" snapped Snape. "Give me your wand, at once!"

"As you wish, Sir."

A moment later, Snape wished he hadn't. All of his skin that had touched Harry's wand was severely burned, his hand was completely paralyzed, and drained of all magic, which would take Madam Pomfrey weeks to restore. Then the Headmaster levitated Harry's wand onto his desk and carefully proceeded to perform the prior incantation spell, which revealed the last few spells Harry had used, all of which were totally benign and classwork related.

"I can do better than that." Said Harry and proceeded to calmly pick up his wand. "I, Harry James Potter swear on the core of my magic that I did not use magic in any form to hurt or otherwise inconvenience Draco Malfoy." His magical oath completed when his entire body was briefly encased in an purple glow.

Snape however was not giving up and was attempting to stare down Harry, at least that is what it seemed to everyone else in the room. But his glaring into Harry's eyes lasted only a few seconds. Then a very bright flash erupted from Harry's left armpit, momentarily blinding Snape. Simultaneously two darts shot at Snape trailing thin, silver wires. Within a tiny fraction of a second, the darts were embedded in Snape's robes. Snape instantly fell to the ground, convulsing in pain and unable to move.

Harry calmly turned off the Taser, without any undue haste. Professors Dumbledore and McGonagall appeared nearly as shocked as their fallen colleague.

"Harry, what happened?" asked the Headmaster finally.

"Snape tried some sort of magic on me, which triggered my new hex defense system. A modified Taser gun really. Quite cool, isn't it?"

"Harry! That is Professor Snape for you. And you cannot attack a Hogwarts teacher." Dumbledore replied sternly.

"Snaippy did that to himself. He has no business directing magic at me without my consent." replied Harry, totally unconcerned.

"But what if your ... your thingamajig malfunctioned? Professor Snape didn't point his wand at you, now did he? How can you be sure?"

Harry pulled up his left sleeve and looked at his wristwatch, which sported several extra dials. "Nope, it functioned perfectly fine. The magical signature was recorded and it was directed at my head. I don't know the spell yet, but I'm sure that Hermione can identify it quickly."

The headmaster slumped into his seat, contemplating what to do. The jovial twinkle in his eyes had vanished. Eventually he drew his wand, quickly pointed it at the fallen potion master and stunned him.

"There is no need for Mrs. Granger to get involved in this unfortunate incident, Harry. Professor Snape is a legilimens, which means that he can read your mind if he is in eye contact with you. He was ill-advised to invade your privacy in this manner. However, he does have good reason to be suspicious." The headmaster paused to collect his thoughts. "I think that it is best for everyone, if no word leaves this office about what just happened. Harry, please trust me on this. We cannot have it be known that a student attacked a teacher for any reason and we also dearly need Professor Snape. You do not know all the facts about this situation and you are too young and inexperienced to appreciate them." Dumbledore pleaded with Harry.

"Alright, I could agree to forget Snape's hostility if you will agree to a few conditions." Dumbledore knew that this was coming, but he still hated every bit of it.

"First, Snape starts behaving like a professional teacher. In particular, this includes no more favoritism for Slytherin and no more harassing of Gryffendor students."

"Second, from now on Snape addresses me and **all** of his students in a respectful and courteous manner. Only then will I return him the favor."

"Third, Snape allows us to brew potions in any way we see fit, provided that the results are satisfactory." This should take care of Snape's stupid cauldron-only rule, which caused Harry so much extra work lately.

The headmaster knew better than to argue. Harry probably had retained hard evidence of Snape's intrusion attempt and he did not technically initiate the attack on Snape himself. Plus he had no evidence linking Harry to the Malfoy incident: strong suspicion would not cut it in a disciplinary hearing. He would have to modify Snape's memory of today and it would be hard to keep him behaving. On the other hand, Harry was far from the only one complaining about Snape.

"Ok, Harry. You may go now." Dumbledore didn't fail to notice Professor McGonagall's consternation. He had some explaining to do.

IIIIIIIIII

On his way back to the Gryffindor common room, Harry was intercepted by George and Fred Weasley.

"Quite a trick you did to the git."

"Oh yes, we are very fond of your taste of colors."

"Yeah, so, so ... oh so subtle."

"I'm rather partial towards pink."



"Oh, yes, it befits Snape nicely."

"But inquiring minds want know..."

"Yes, indeed they do. And there is also the mystery of invisible sleeper."

"...right, how could I forget that. How is it that a certain first year Gryffindor's bed appears to be unused more often then not?"

"Or is it that said Gryffindor prefers to spend his nights in the Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw dungeons?"

"How do two you know that??"

"How about a secret for a secret?"

"A fair trade indeed, oh brother of mine."

"Alright, I guess. Let's go to my Lab."

Once the Weasley twins got over their shock of entering a large muggle laboratory in Hogwarts, Harry demanded tit for tat and learned the secret of the Maruder's map.

"Now it's your turn Harry, so what is the spell you used on Malfoy and his gang?"

"No spell at all. Lysergic acid diethylamide."

"Lysergic what?"

"LSD, it is a muggle drug that causes hallucinations. It is very potent. Just 20-30 micrograms will do the trick. I sprayed the gits with some LSD. You can inhale it, eat it or adsorb it through the skin. Add some dimethyl sulfoxide and it sails right through the skin."

"That's all? No magic at all? Where did that red shark come from?"

"Oh, there was plenty of magic. It was just their accidental magic that caused all that ruckus. It seems that acid trips are pretty eventful affairs for wizards. I guess Snape could have stopped it instantly if he

had stunned them, but that idea didn't occur to him.” shrugged Harry, while Fred and George collected their jaws from the floor.

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Harry's life was looking up. He greatly enjoyed his increasing ability to control his life. He, Daphne and Hermione would spend most of their free time in his lab or library. Fred and George were frequent visitors and began to join some of Harry's experiments and started some of their own projects with Harry's assistance. Hermione appreciated the telephone to keep in touch with her parents and Albus quickly found himself in need of adding more circuits to accommodate the other students with muggle relatives. But that was just one of a growing number of headaches for the headmaster. Another was that Harry's constant stream of mail-orders quickly wore out all the school's owls and he had to set up a mail box plus shuttle service in the nearest muggle village.

Harry had added a pager system, ostentatiously to inform him of the progress of his experiments while in class. However, the system was also connected to a computer with a camera that monitored the Maruder's map constantly and kept him and his friends advised about the whereabouts of all teachers. Their pagers would vibrate in their pockets to alert them of company. Harry also had placed magically shrunk and hardened, electronic bugs in Dumbledore's office, the teacher's lounge, Snape's office, the Slytherin common room and other strategic places. That helped him a great deal to smooth his operation and to avoid unnecessary confrontations. The twins were fascinated by all the new opportunities that combining muggle technology like radios, video-cameras and remote control with magic offered. Only Hermione was distraught by the idea of tracking their teachers, a concept that didn't bother Daphne in the least.

Harry spend most of his time working on experiments that included elements from both magic and science. Magic allowed him to trace molecules and unravel reaction pathways that were beyond reach of his scientific instruments. This in turn lead to the discovery of several drugs that he sold to muggle pharmaceutical companies. On the other hand, scientific methods allowed him to isolate and understand the active ingredients in magical potions which produced too many

inventions for Fred Abel to commercialize so that Harry had to start two additional magical ventures. In only a few months after arriving at Hogwarts, Harry kept a small army of solicitors, accountants and managers busy in both the magical and the muggle worlds, much to the delight of the goblins at Gringotts, who were having a record year from all the transaction fees, interests and a vastly increased revenue from their muggle department.

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“Hello Harry, please have a seat. Would you like a lemon drop?” said Dumbledore to his most troublesome student. “Why did you want to see me?”

“Thank you, Professor.” replied Harry while taking one of the offered sweets. “I hired a few science teachers for Hogwarts and need some place for them to live. At minimum, they will help me with my experiments in the lab and give me one-on-one lessons, but I thought that the other Hogwarts students could benefit from them as well. You see, I have been explaining some things to my friends, but I'm no good at teaching.”

Albus didn't need to look at the portraits of his predecessors to know what they thought of students who hire teachers first and let the headmaster know second.

“But Harry, don't you think that your schedule is already full?”

“Oh no, not at all. More than two thirds of my classes are totally useless. Take History of Magic, for example. Or Divination. Or broom flying. Or care of magical creatures. Potions could be cool but lacks a decent teacher. Astronomy is wacky and disorganized. Arithmancy is just a weird subset of topology, differential geometry with a bit of group theory, thinly disguised with clunky jargon. Quirrell goes the extra mile to avoid making any practical points. Herbology is so so, but lacks a systematic approach and rigor. At most transfiguration and charms are worth paying any attention to - occasionally. I'm skipping most of the junk lessons anyway. So, yes I do have ample time.”

“Well, I heard about that. But don't you worry about your OWLs?”

“Why, no, that would be silly. You can't even mention them in your resume, so I don't plan wasting time to take them.” replied Harry, genuinely puzzled. “I'm worried about my math, chemistry, biology and physics grades. Do you have any idea how hard it is to get admitted to a good university?”

Dumbledore didn't, but he knew that Harry's grasp on scientific subject matters was miles ahead of excellent. Considering his patent portfolio and his wealth, the headmaster knew that Harry will have no trouble to attend any university of his choosing. In fact, Harry's most recent weapon was an open admission letter by a Harvard Professor, who begged Harry to join his group at least once a month after learning that Harry had unraveled how the DNA methylation pattern was preserved during mitosis.

Harry's frequent and overt skiving of classes was bad for student morale as were his many conference and seminar trips, but there was little the headmaster could do about it. Harry just ignored detentions, didn't care about house points, and threats of expulsion were called bluff from the get go. Furthermore, when Dumbledore promised Harry time for his studies, he had neglected to limit how much. His only consolidation was that Harry was actually quite competent at learning magic and Harry aced all exams he choose to take.

“But Harry, do your teachers know about magic? The secrecy decree is rigorously enforced and if you were to violate that, you would be severely punished. You know that, don't you?”

“Yes certainly, Sir. But that is no problem. Three of them come from families with one magical person and the last one comes from a magical family, she just can't do any magic herself, but she's real smart. They all know of magic.”

Dumbledore floated a few more objections, but he knew that Harry wouldn't take no for an answer. In addition, he could see quite a few benefits from a souped up muggle studies program. So in the end Harry got permission to renovate 4 unused classrooms and have his teachers take up residence in the staff wing, with the explicit understanding that they were **not** part of the official Hogwarts faculty.

While the headmaster had great difficulty to placate a rebellious magical faculty and an even more upset board of governors, Harry proceeded with the renovation of the four classrooms. In reality, all he did was to tell one of his managers 'ask his teachers what they would like and make it happen, let the costs be damned'. Managers excel at that kind of assignments. The result were four shiny new, state of the art classrooms with excellent lighting, ergonomic chairs, superb acoustics, studio quality audio/video systems, ample science demonstration equipment and an interior design to shame five star conference resorts. Needless to say, this compounded Dumbledore's headaches. Harry's teachers turned out to be truly excellent. Not only were they actually top-notch university professors, they also had extensive experience and psychological training as educators. In short order, their classes were very popular among students with muggle background. This added to the discontent among the Hogwarts faculty, which was also fueled by the fact that Harry paid his teachers about 12 times more than their remuneration.

IIIIIIII

"They cheated! I demand that the game is annulled and that Slytherin is awarded a win over Gryffendor!" Snape shouted angrily while pacing back and forth in the Headmaster's office. The other professors watched the exchange passively.

"And your rational for that would be?" asked Dumbledore calmly.

"Isn't it obvious? Their brooms flew at least twice as fast as the Slytherin ones! Someone tampered with them. And I think we all know who that someone is."

Without saying another word, Albus switched on a TV set on his desk and put in a rectangular, black piece of plastic into a slot below the screen. Shortly, the image of the school's broom shed appeared on the screen. A little while later a group of students appeared.

"Alohamora!" and the doors of the shed opened.

"Which brooms do we fix, Draco?"

"All of them, of cause. Flint knows the counter spell."

Albus stopped the VCR a few minutes later.

“Quite a nifty muggle invention. It turns itself on when it sees something moving. You were saying Severus?”

“Potter!” spat Snape. “And you allowed him to use this muggle contraption to spy on my students?”

“Actually, I'm a bit puzzled as to why Harry bothered to set it up myself, but the fact remains that when we checked the brooms yesterday, they were indeed all hexed to fly erratically. It took a lot of effort before Madam Hooch was satisfied that they were fit to be used again. The broom shed had been guarded continuously until this game.”

“But... if the brooms were all the same, how could they fly this fast and reckless? You saw them! Those were no normal brooms. They could turn much quicker, had insane acceleration and could even fly backwards and upside-down!” replied Snape.

“We don't know. But we do know that the brooms are just ordinary school brooms. The same as ever. I personally checked them again after the game.” added Madam Hooch.

“I demand a full investigation!” continued Snape

“Do you really? I mean, it would have to include Draco and his gang.” replied Albus evenly.

“I see. - Fine.” replied Snape uncomfortably, “But we must clamp down on all this muggle nonsense that Potter uses to tarnish Hogwarts. Do you have any idea how much trouble he causes? Take quilts for example. They don't use them anymore, only those damned pens. No ink either. That gives them an unfair advantage. And even when I insist that they write their homework in a sane way, Potter and his friends hand in scrolls that are obviously not done by hand. Every letter is written exactly in the same way and there is never any sign of a correction.”

“They use a word-processor with a pen-plotter in Harry's lab. Hermione told me.” McGonagal added in a resigned voice. “I don't

know what those things are, but they do help them write much faster than other students.”

“What does a walkman do, Albus?” asked a puzzled Prof. Flitwick

“They are seen with many printed Journals and Magazines in class, most of them of Muggle origin. They have artifacts that record pictures and sounds. They have “TVs” and “VCRs” whatever those are. Hermione has a little plastic pad with buttons on it that can calculate certain arithmancy equations for her. And she produced a printed magic affinity chart that we discussed after one lecture. From the initial idea to completion took her only a few hours. To calculate and draw such a chart would have taken me at least a year.” added a distraught Prof. Vector.

“Her telescope finds celestial objects all by itself and it is much more powerful than anything I ever saw in my life. Takes pictures too. Yet it is much shorter than our school telescope. She calls it a Schmidt-Cassegrain and was wondering why our telescopes do not use AR coated optics. On top of that, she has access to all sorts of astronomical data. She even got perfect pictures of Saturn, despite the fact that we had overcast the entire homework period. Harry and Daphne use the same equipment and the rest of the class is near mutiny.”

“The other student with muggle background are beginning to use all sorts of devices too. They just give them to Harry and his gang, who manage to make them work here, often much better. Don't you think that the statues against misuse of muggle artifacts becomes an issue?”

“Slytherine morale is at an all time low. After at least a dozen incidents, many of which ended with some of my students in the hospital wing, Potter and his friends have never received even a single detention or lost one measly house point. Albus, you can't seriously think that he-who-runs-this-asylum is a saint!”

“Well, it isn't all bad. I had several Slytherin students sign up for Muggle studies. Some of them are re-examining their believes.”

The muggle teachers were not present. They were the white elephant that no one talked about. All teachers had seen the disdain on the face of students that entered their classrooms after having had a lesson from **them**.

"Albus, you opened Pandora's box. You must close it before the mudbloods get any ideas." growled Snape.

"Severus, language! ... But I fear that it is too late for that. Harry's ventures already constitute nearly 2 of the entire magical economy, a fraction that is rising fast and that pales compared to his resources from his muggel enterprises. Few know so far, but the Goblins do. They became fiercely protective of the goose that lays golden eggs."

Prof. McGonagal broke the stunned silence with a resigned sigh, "Albus, what will happen seven years from now? When Harry graduates? At this rate, he will be minister of magic before then."

"... or dead." added Snape.

After the meeting, which had dragged on seemingly for hours, Dumbledore sat at his desk pondering his options. He sensed that Hogwart's power structure, which resembled that of the magical world at large, was indeed adrift. Dumbledore too had noticed that Harry and his friends, including the Weasley twins, where never caught doing any mischief - yet the amount of which was at an all time high. They also appeared to know entirely too much, but he could not figure out how. Yet another headache was Harry's performance in class. His use of muggle devices encouraged the other muggle born wizards to use technology too, which gave them an edge that was much resented by the traditional pure blood fraction. Their grievance was compounded by the fact that all of their attempts to intimidate Harry or his friends and sympathizers backfired and resulted in painful disasters. He knew that this would inevitably lead to increasingly bitter attempts of retribution. Unfortunately there was little that he could do about it. Harry's resources continued to grow exponentially. Hardly a week went by in which Harry had not filed for half a dozen patents or started at least one business. Harry was recklessly changing the magical world, trampling on a great many written and unwritten rules. Sooner than later, the ministry would



wake up and resist. Harry doesn't seem to be aware of his impact – yet, but Albus knew the kind of power that emanated from vaults full of gold. That kind of power in the hand of a bright, hyperactive teenager was a surefire recipe for havoc or a revolution. Harry's friends were also a force to reckon with. Hermione was as brilliant in physics as she was in magic. Daphne had a knack for strategic thinking and was well connected in the magical world and the Weasley twins were a lot more than super-pranksters. Plus most students with awareness of the non-magical world had become loyal sympathizers. And on top of all these storm clouds on the horizon, his informants had not picked up any signs of Voldemort since the start of the school year. Albus was way too experienced to regard this lack of news as a good sign. With all this on his mind, he had paid no attention to Hagrid's report of a slain unicorn in the forbidden forest.

IIIIIIII

Meanwhile in the Gryffindor common room a victory celebration was in full swing.

“Harry, your flywear is fabulous!” enthused Oliver Wood, the Quidditch team captain. “We hardly needed the brooms at all.”

“Thank Hermione for that. It was mostly her work with some help from Fred and George.” replied Harry.

“I really thought you lost your marbles when you brought that leather underwear, and the bulky belt. If it hadn't been for Fred walking on the ceiling of the locker room...”

“yeah I know, it is a bit different. But I thought wearing the levitators on the body is more comfortable than sitting on a stick. You can't fall off, have your hands free and the force is distributed over a larger area. The thrust vector is always aligned with the center of mass. You can accelerate much faster that way. But really, the key was Hermione's discovery of how brooms dump impulse into hyperspace. Once we could control that, the rest was child's play.”

“Whatever you say, mate.” replied a confused looking Wood. “but can you keep this under wraps until we have bagged the cup?”

"Sure. As long you wear those loose fitting robes, nobody should be able to see it. And I'll be too busy to set up volume production for flywear until summer at least. I'm sure the patent application can wait until then too."

Oliver got the distinct impression that he was talking with someone from another planet, but that didn't matter. He knew that the days of broomsticks were numbered and he fully intended to be one of the first broom-less pro Quiditch players in history.

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"Do you know why I've called you here Patrick?" Professor Snape asked.

"Not a clue Severus," Patrick Greengrass replied. "Does it have something to do with my daughter?"

"I'm afraid it does," Snape sighed. "Your daughter . . . Daphne has been spending a lot of time around Potter. So much time in fact that her classmates are beginning to wonder about her."

"Ah, is that all?" Patrick said with a laugh. "I'm well aware of that, in fact I've encouraged her to continue her friendship with the Potter boy and the muggle girl."

"You have?" Snape asked in shock. "Why?"

"You're asking me why I'm encouraging my daughter to pursue young Potter?" Patrick asked with an amused grin. "Let me put it another way. You're asking why I'm encouraging my daughter to go after a young wizard that has fortune, fame, runs many very profitable businesses and is well on his way to be one of the greatest potions masters of our time?"

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Harry hardly noticed the approaching Christmas break. Having been shunned by the Dursleys had left him without any sense of Christmas tradition. In addition, his exposure to magic had opened so many avenues to further his studies that he hardly noticed the world outside

his laboratory. The interaction with his new teachers was great and Hermione was quickly turning into a physics genius. Even Daphne and the Weasley twins could sense the excitement that permeated the laboratory. They were onto something. Ever since his summer in the Grunning laboratory, Harry was addicted to the thrill of cutting edge research. The challenge, the hunt and ultimately the triumph of mind over matter. His boundless energy and enthusiasm was contagious. Thus it took the combined efforts of all his friends to yank Harry away from the lab on Christmas day. Threatened with death by tickling, Harry had to swear a magical oath not to work for the next 48 hours, or even to think about his experiments.

It was worth it. For the first time in Harry's life, he felt something like happiness. It was a new, strange, and confusing sensation. He finally noticed the decorations, the festive mood and his friends. He hadn't really realized that he had friends, some strange humans that seem to actually like him. Perhaps Christian Grunnings was his friend. He had felt it, but this was a bit different. These people were his age, he had things in common with them. Sitting leisurely in the Gryffindor common room, listening to Christmas music from the stereo system and watching Hermione and Daphne happily unpacking their presents made him notice things that he had never realized before. He had bought them presents because that is what you do on Christmas, but now he began to feel something. Just being there, not worrying about a thing in the world, relaxing, and watching the joy in his friends eyes. Somehow he realized that this moment was precious.

Harry opened his first present, a book on the top 50 unsolved mysteries in chemistry. It was from Hermione. He read her card multiple times. Her words touched him. Daphne's present was also a book: "The 50 unfinished potions that could change the world". He smiled and hugged his two friends. Feeling their warmth, he found himself wishing that this moment would never end. Very peculiar.

Harry received one mystery present, a cloak that made the wearer invisible. The present had a card advising him to use this invisibility cloak responsibly, but it carried no name or address. Puzzled, but happy, Harry added the cloak to the pile of his presents.

Christmas had ended and Harry did not immediately resume his normal work schedule. Instead he enjoyed the quite time between Christmas and new year with his friends. From playing in the snow to playing games, he enjoyed the carefree life of a normal teenager. This was by far the best vacation he ever had.

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School resumed normally and Harry quickly returned to living on caffeine, rarely sleeping more than 4 hours a day, and working on a multitude of projects. His magical classes were as slow paced and boring as ever. Harry was very adapt to learn from books on his own. He could learn from lectures and classes, but that worked best if the teachers matched Harry's pace and kept him interested, like his science teachers did. Now that he had his invisibility cloak, Harry began to systematically raid the restricted section of Hogwarts library, which quickly eliminated the need to attend the DADA class at all. This suited Harry just fine because he didn't care much for the headaches he felt from being near Professor Quirrell.

Life had just settle in this new routine when Harry was walking back from the library to his lab at about one hour past midnight. His pager did not alert him of Mr. Filch or any teachers, so Harry was thinking about the book he just read and didn't pay much attention to his surroundings. Suddenly he felt rather tired. He was in the last hallway before his lab, which has poor lighting, but now it was pitch black. Harry could not see a thing. Moreover, an intense and unnatural tiredness began to grip him. He was about float away toward unconsciousness when he felt the sudden jolt of the flash-powder charges from his anti-hex system. It seemed that all 4 charges had gone off simultaneously, but he did not see much of the flash. And the bang had been rather muffled. On the other hand, he felt the tiredness quickly receding. Because his flashlight didn't seem to put out much light, Harry grabbed a magnesium flare from his pocket and ignited it. The extremely bright, ultra-violet rich light from the flare showed a spooky scene. All around him were shreds of a dark, shadowy cloth that withered from the intense light. It seemed to be alive, but was fading from the light of the flare. Harry quickly took a few shreds and placed them in a dark brown sample jar and capped it with a black lid. The jar seemed to protect it from the light of the flare,

which was evaporating the remnants of the black shroud fast. Feeling fine again, Harry waited until the last shred of dark matter had disappeared and retired to his lab.

Harry met Hermione at breakfast and described the strange incident.

"You mean there was a dark, black cloak that warped itself around you and made you feel tired?"

"Yeah, exactly. It did not have much substance. It was very soft. You could hardly feel it when you touch it. And it could not stand intense light. It would adsorb the light from my flashlight, but the flash-power discharges and the magnesium flare were too much for it."

"Harry, I think you are very lucky to be alive! What you told me is the textbook description of a lethifold. It is a dangerous creature that hides in the shadows at night waiting for pray. It is totally silent. It wraps itself around its victim which quickly looses consciousness. Then it siphons off the life force from its victim. Without your anti-hex, you would have died in less than an hour!"

"Are you sure? Oh, well. We can check it out. I collected some samples of it."

"How?" asked Hermione.

"I put some fragments in a dark glass jar. They are now in the deep freezer in the lab."

Harry read up on lethifolds during the morning, which was a subject that had not been covered in the DADA class, even though it was part of the curriculum. A few tests on his samples confirmed that it was indeed a lethifold encounter.

"Hermione, you were right. It was indeed a lethifold." Harry told her during lunch. "Now the mystery is: how did it get into school? The book said that lethifolds stay away from buildings and people: too much light. You only have to worry about them in magical forests at night. The torches of Hogwarts should have kept them safely away."

"Yeah, I know. It is very strange. You know what is strange too?" replied Hermione.

"No?"

"I ask Professor Quirrell about lethifolds this morning in the DADA class and he seemed to be very startled by this question. He stuttered for nearly 5 minutes before he told the class that we would never need to worry about them. Then he changed the subject."

"That's odd. Lethifolds **are** covered by our DADA textbook. Why would he skip them? I never thought much of his class anyway, but this is suspicious."

Later in the lab, Harry pondered last night's incident. He was about to seek out the Headmaster when he got an idea and went to check out the log from the Marauder's Map tracking system. Harry searched if there was anyone in that hallway before his encounter. And sure enough, about 2 hours earlier Prof. Quirrell and a Tom Riddle were in that hallway. They had stayed there for some ten minutes before leaving the same way they came. This was no accident!

"What's wrong Harry?" Daphne called from the library. She had seen Harry suddenly get up from his terminal, visibly shaken.

"I just found out that someone tried to kill me last night!" shouted Harry, slamming his fist on the table and kicking his chair.

"Are you sure?" asked a concerned Daphne, trying to calm Harry.

"Unfortunately, I'm very sure about this." He proceeded to tell her the entire story, which actually helped him to manage his anger.

Later, after dinner Harry, Daphne, Hermione, Fred and George were meeting to discuss what to do.

"So the good news is that the anti-hex works against lethifolds and the bad news is that Prof. Quirrell and this Tom Riddle are trying to kill me."

"You don't know that they put the lethifold there and you don't know that it was meant for you." objected Hermione.

"Well you and me walked through that hallway at 8:34pm when there was no lethifold. At 1:07am there was one and only Quirrell and Riddle were in that Hallway between these times. On top of that, they walked in, stay at about the spot where I was attacked and went back to his quarter. They did not pass through the hallway, just to the one spot and back. It is just a plain, empty, dark hallway there. No paintings, no classroom, no nothing. They had no reason to stop there for 10 minutes." countered Harry.

"Ok, what if they encountered the lethifold there and tried to capture it?"

"Then they should have succeeded or alerted the headmaster. These things are deadly. You just don't call it a day and do nothing if you failed to handle one. This is the DADA professor for crying out loud!"

"What if they put it there for some other reason? Maybe it was meant to be a test for someone. They did not know you would pass through that hallway, Harry."

"Well, maybe. But that does sound awfully far fetched and dangerous. Lethifolds can move. Even if they fixed it there somehow, they should have guarded it to make sure nobody else gets hurt."

"Who is this Tom Riddle anyhow?" interrupted Fred.

"I don't know. I think we should find out."

"Why don't we ask Prof. Dumbledore?" suggested Hermione.

"And how do we explain to him where we got that name? We can't tell him about the Map." objected George.

"Right, but I think he needs to know about this attack. I'll leave out Quirrell and Riddle when I talk to him for now. But I agree that we need to find out more about these characters. And we need to be very careful. Do any of you have any ideas why someone might want to kill me?"

"You really need to ask?" puzzled Daphne.

"What do you mean?" asked Harry.

"I think she meant Voldemort." volunteered Hermione.

Fred and George cringed while Daphne almost fainted. "You should never say his name." she gasped.

"Harry, I think you need to read up a little on recent history, say the period from about 30 years ago until you lost your parents." suggested Fred trying to defuse the situation. It was nearly curfew time and his friends had to retire to their dorm. Harry set out for the library.

IIIIIIII

"Would you like a lemon drop?"

"No, thank you." replied Harry, not being in any mood for small talk. Instead he angrily slammed a dark brown glass sample jar on the Headmaster's desk. The loud bang startled the headmaster and woke up all portraits.

"What is in there?" ask Prof. Dumbledore when it became clear that Harry was awaiting his reaction.

"Freshly tanned lethifold." replied Harry, pacing in fort of his desk and staring down at the seated Headmaster. "Care to explain why these creatures are allowed to roam Hogwarts at night? And while you are at it, feel free to include mountain trolls in your exposition."

Dumbledore was stunned. Harry was clearly upset, but not in the *just-escaped-from-a-deadly-encounter* kind of way. Harry's righteous indignation seemed acted, calculated. He guessed that Harry's meeting the lethifold was not all that recent, that Harry had had time to investigate, and that Harry held back some information. Dumbledore was being tested and a '*don't worry, we will take good care of you, Hogwarts is safe*' speech will most definitely not do.



“Please have a seat, Harry. I guess it is time for me to explain some unpleasant facts of the magical world that may concern you. However before I do that, could you perhaps tell me a little more about what happened.” replied Dumbledore, trying carefully to feel his way out of a trap.

Harry explained the basic facts, leaving out his discovery of Quirrell's and Riddle's roll in his assassination plot. But he pointedly mentioned the troll encounter, strongly suggesting a connection.

Dumbledore was alarmed. “Harry, I think you are right. There never have been lethifolds inside of Hogwarts before. And neither did wild trolls ever enter school while classes were in session.”

Then Dumbledore proceeded to tell Harry about Voldemort, how his parents died and how he got his scar. He could see from Harry's stoic face that none of this was news to him. Indeed, he was being tested.

After the headmaster had finished his account, Harry bluntly asked “Is Voldemort dead?”

“No, I don't think so. I don't think that he is fully alive either, but I have reason to believe that Voldemort is trying to regain a body and that he may succeed.” That did not do. Albus immediately sensed that he lost ground.

“And what exactly are your reasons for this '*belief*' ?” Harry angrily snapped back. He hated being fed half-truths.

“I'm sorry, Harry. I should have mentioned that some friends of mine and myself have been looking for signs of Voldemort's activities. For example, we received reports from people in Albania who had sensed an invisible presence. By them self, such reports are easily dismissed. But if you collect them and trace the reported locations, you find that there is a pattern. Also, consider that a disembodied Voldemort would likely seek help to regain a body and that there are not too many dark wizards inclined to help him. Thus I had some ideas where to look. It happens that the possible Voldemort sightings are near places where you might find such dark wizards. Unfortunately, I did not receive any recent reports and I fear that there has been some new development, which is most likely not good for us.”

“And why did you drag me to Hogwarts?”

“I want to help you and I think that if Voldemort returns, he will try to hurt you. That is why I think you need to learn magic to be able to protect yourself.”

Harry didn't believe that that was the whole story for a second, but he let this half truth slide for now. Instead, he opened a new offensive on a different front:

“What is in the west wing on the third floor?” Hermione had reminded him that the Headmaster had made a peculiar announcement about the third floor during the welcome feast and he was currently inclined to see connections between mysteries.

“I can't tell you that because of security reasons.” the headmaster replied, a little too rehearsed. He could see from Harry's reaction that he just failed his test, but he was just too used to control his empire unquestioned.

“When you changed your mind, you know where to find me.” with that Harry got up and quickly left the headmaster's office. He was now certain that there was a connection. The headmaster hadn't been expecting his last question and his rushed, unresponsive reply was all the confirmation he needed. But knowing that something was going on that involved the forbidden third floor section was a long way from knowing how this all fit together. He needed information.

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Information comes from the source, so from now on Prof. Quirrell's movements were watched constantly. Rover had already entered Quirrell's office and living quarters to deploy electronic bugs and tracking transmitters, some of which were glued to Quirrell's robes. 'Rover' is a radio controlled toy tank that can shoot electronic bugs and that also featured cameras, night vision equipment, microphones and a radio link. While Rover is actually quite large, once magically shrunk it is a tad smaller than a cockroach and has no trouble driving under closed doors.

"This is really odd. Quirrell and Riddle never separate. They even go to the loo together." said Harry to his friends when they met after dinner to review their intelligence two days later. "Look at this:"

Harry played a Rover video from Quirrell's living room. Quirrell was apologizing profusely to his "master" for having failed to find the stone and to kill Potter. But only Quirrell could be seen. The "master" could be heard however, commanding him to try harder. He also ordered him to gather ingredients for a certain potion.

"He could be wearing an invisibility cloak", suggested Hermione.

"Yeah, but why bother: he locked all doors and cast several privacy charms."

"Those were pretty advanced charms. I need to do some research on those."

"Good that they don't stop radio waves."

"The Headmaster thinks Voldemort ... oh come on, it is just a name ... isn't dead but is just a body short. Could that be this 'master'?" Mused Harry.

"Is there a connection between Voldemort and Riddle?" asked Hermione.

"All I could find about Tom Riddle is that there was a Hogwarts headboy of that name in 1947. Here, Tom Marvolo Riddle, got some sort of trophy for helping Hogwarts. No details though, which is unusual. All other special trophies come with explanations."

"That's not too long before he who mu... whatever rose to power." said Daphne.

"So besides trying to kill me, this odd couple is looking for a stone. Any idea what kind of stone that could be?" asked Harry to no one in particular.

After a long silence, Hermione shrugged. "No, but you were right. They really want to kill you. What shall we do now?"

“Wait, observe and prepare. I could do something about him, but now that I know, I'm not too worried about a surprise attack. I rather try to learn more about this plot than to hand Quirriddle over to the Police.”

“Aurors, Harry.” injected George.

“Right. Dumbledore is hiding something, but perhaps I have my staff hire some private eyes to do some digging.”

That turned out a bit more difficult than Harry thought. The magical world had very few private investigators, and mentioning Voldemort would cause the few he found to wet their pants and run. Only a goblin from Gringott's special services office didn't seem to care and began to investigate the Riddle family story. His disappearance from public life was indeed only a few years before Voldemort emerged. But more interesting was that Riddle's class mates were thought of as core death eaters, in particular one Lucius Malfoy.

IIIIIIII

Over the next few months, Harry spend some time on trying to understand the potions Quirrell was preparing for his master. Indeed, they had something to do with stabilizing spirits, creating artificial bodies and replenishing life-force. However all of these potions were incomplete stop-gap measures. Eventually a testable hypnosis emerged: if, as Harry suspected, Riddle was the disembodied Voldemort, Quirrell was likely to acquire fresh unicorn blood for some of his potions. Spying on Quirrell also yielded a reference to the elixir of life in a book from Hogwarts restricted library section. That lead him to a description of the Philosopher's stone created by alchemist Nicolas Flamel, who was said to be a friend of one Albus Dumbledore, despite being born in 1330. At this point, Harry had the feeling that the pieces of the puzzle may come together. He called for meeting with his friends after dinner. Unfortunately, Fred and George were busy with Quidditch practice.

“Harry, I think you are on to something. I talked to Hagrid, the Hogwarts game keeper, and he did find slain unicorns in the forbidden forest. Two so far, one shortly after the start of the school year and one two weeks ago. That was just two days after Quirrell's last nightly excursion.” reported Hermine.

"That makes sense. I noticed that Quirrill's master was a bit more talkative lately and I think that I saw something like unicorn blood used in a potion from a Rover video recently." replied Harry. Then he explained how the philosopher's stone may fit into this picture.

"So you think that Quirriddle is after this stone, which the headmaster hid here at Hogwarts in the forbidden part of the third floor." summarized Daphne.

"Exactly. Now the question is what to do about it. I think we agree that Riddle shouldn't lay his missing hands on that stone. So we could warn the headmaster, which would lead to some unpleasant questions."

"Well we could fabricate a reason to be suspicious from the fact that the DADA skipped over lethifolds. That let us to snoop around a bit and we were just lucky that Rover got us some incriminating videos." suggested Hermione.

"Sounds plausible. That might cost us Rover though." agreed Daphne.

"Hey, Quirriddle is on the third floor." shouted Harry, who sat next to the terminal of the Maruder's map tracking system.

"Where is Dumbledore?" asked Hermione.

"Not in the system right now. Must have left Hogwarts."

"Damn. That's no coincidence. What shall we do?"

"I say let's go and have a look what Quirriddle is up to." Suggested Harry. Reluctantly, his friends agreed.

IIIIIIII

They quickly reached the third floor door to the forbidden section. Once inside the room, they spotted a giant, alert, three headed dog. It sat near the center of the large room. It was not amused, growled once and got up. Unfazed, Harry fetched a device with several metal cylinders from his pocket and aimed it at the dog.

"Hold your breath." he shouted at his companions. Next a hissing sound from Harry's device could be heard and soon thereafter the dog was fast asleep.

"Here, quickly cover your nose and mouth with these, then breathe normally." continued Harry, handing out disposable respirators.

"Activated charcoal, takes care of the Halothane I used to put that doggy to sleep." added Harry when he met Hermione's questioning eyes.

It didn't take long for them to find and open the trapdoor in the middle of the room. Harry drooped a magnesium flare down the pitch black opening and observed some dark plants at the bottom of the shaft wither away in the bright light.

Using a rope from Harry's magically enlarged supply pocket, they descended the shaft and began to explore. The shaft, which was about 12 feet deep, was connected to a short tunnel that lead to room with only one door. There was a swarm of winged keys, buzzing angrily near the tall ceiling.

"We're going to have to get on a broom and pick out the right key," Hermione said in realization. "Uh . . . are either of you good enough to get it?"

"I might be," Daphne said with a frown. "But it'll take me a while . . . what are you doing Harry?"

"Mixing up some thermite," Harry replied absently.

"What's thermite?" Hermione asked.

"You might say it's a key to every lock," Harry replied. "Cover your eyes." The girls had known Harry long enough not to question him about things like this and both slapped their hands over their eyes immediately. "Ok, you can open them now."

"Uh . . . how did you burn a hole through the door?" Daphne asked in shock.

"I told you," Harry said. "Thermite, iron oxide and aluminum powder, mixed with a bit of magic so it ignores gravity and there you are."

"Oh . . . let's go then." The three students walked through the door to find a room with a larger than life chess set. The sculptured stone pieces sported an intimidating arsenal of ancient weaponry.

"I think we're suppose to play through," Daphne said. "Harry . . . what's that bottle in your hand?"

"Nitro Glycerin," Harry replied. "You two might want to go back into the other room for a moment."

"Nitro . . ." Hermione's eyes widened in shock and she immediately grabbed Daphne by the arm and forced her into the other room. They were joined a few moments later by Harry.

"What did you just . . ." Daphne was interrupted by a giant explosion and a cloud of dust coming through the open doorway. "Never mind."

The next room was rather spartan. It had one table with several bottles and one note. As they approached the table, a curtain of flames blocked the way forward. Hermione began to read the note.

"One of us is going to have to stay here, one of us can go forward, and one of us will have to go back for help." Hermione said. "Just give me a moment to work out this riddle."

"We could do that," Harry agreed. The girls watched as he pulled out a fire extinguisher and hosed down the flames. "Or we could all go ahead."

"Why did you have a fire extinguisher with you?" Hermione demanded.

"You'd be surprised at how often I need to use it," Harry replied with a shrug.

"Actually," Hermione said. "No I wouldn't."

"Let's just go," Daphne said in exasperation.

"Ok," Harry agreed.

In the next room, they finally found Prof. Quirrell, who was busily examining a large, decorative mirror. The room was circular and fairly large. It could have been some kind demonstration hall, for it had circular seating around a depressed center stage. Quirrell seemed to be rather frustrated, alternatively muttering apologies and begging for directions.

"Excuse me, Professor Quirrell. You wouldn't happen to know where I might find Mr. Tom Riddle?" interrupted Harry casually.

"Y.Y...You" stammered a startled Quirrell.

"THERE IS NO TOM RIDDLE. I am Lord Voldemort, the greatest wizard in history." the angry voice of the master bellowed from the same direction. "Let me handle him." With that, the DADA professor turned around and removed his turban to reveal a grotesque second face on the back of his head.

"And so we meet again. Harry Potter!" spat Voldemort after he shook off his rage. He then began to rave about ruling the world and graciously offered Harry to join his quest.

"You see Potter," Voldemort said. "There is no good or evil, only power and . . . are you listening to me?"

"Sorry about that," Harry said as he pulled his sprayer out of his pocket. "I just needed to find this." With that, Harry shot a long stream of liquid into the dark lord's face.

"Arrrg," Voldemort screamed, dropping his wand and clutching his eyes. "What have you done to me."

"Formaldehyde," the girls replied together.

Harry rotated the barrel of cylinders and squirted Quirrell's wand with another liquid which instantly burst into flames and quickly incinerated the wand. "White phosphorus dissolved in carbon disulphide - you may want to put the respirators back on. That white smoke isn't too healthy."



After one more rotation of the barrel, Harry began to douse Quirrell's robes with a clear, somewhat viscous liquid. After he was satisfied that the whimpering Quirrell was thoroughly soaked, Harry switched to yet another liquid and briefly sprayed Quirrell again. The robes instantly solidified and Quirrell was glued to the spot.

"Loctite 382, a space filling cyanoacrylate. It is a tad expensive, but it bonds well to skin and hardens in seconds with the Tak Pak 7452 accelerator. Has a tensile strength of more than 7 Newtons per square millimeter. Quirrell isn't going anywhere. Is anyone up for spell practice?" said Harry to his recovering friends.

A shaken Hermione tried a timid "Stupefy" on Quirrell followed by a more enthusiastic "Petrificus Totalis" from Daphne, who had recovered a bit faster from facing Voldemort. Many more spells followed.

Meanwhile, Harry examined the mirror and saw himself holding a red stone, which his mirror image placed in its pocket. When he examined his pocket, he indeed felt a stone in it.

"I think we are done here. Let's find Fred and George, they should have finished by now." said Harry as he walked towards the exit, leaving a severely stunned and bound DADA professor behind. It would take the aurors nearly a day to free him later, mostly because they confused the resin with magic.

IIIIIIII

The next morning, the trio alerted the Headmaster to the whereabouts of his defense against the dark arts professor. Harry used Hermione's idea of explaining how they started to suspect Quirrell and left out any incriminating details. While it was clear that neither Dumbledore nor Snape believed their story, neither dared to use Legilimency on Harry or his friends. Quirrell had confessed, and Voldemort was still trapped in his body when the aurors arrived. The trio's statements were well rehearsed, and convinced the ministry official who lead the interview. With all parties eager to hush up the incident, no hard questions were raised.

The debriefing in the headmasters office finished just after lunch. Harry was about to leave the office and follow his friends when Dumbledore called him back.

"I'm afraid that I have some bad news to tell you." said the headmaster after closing the door. "You see, the Minister of Magic, Cornelius Fudge panicked when confronted with Prof. Quirrell and ordered him kissed by a dementor right away. That was a grave mistake. He should have let the Unspeakables study the situation first. Alas, it appears that the dementor's kiss only got Quirrell's soul and that Voldemort's spirit was freed in the process."

"Well isn't that special. So we are back to square one."

"So it seems, but perhaps we learned a bit to help us in the future."

"Right! Have nice and pleasant day, Headmaster." replied Harry scornfully and turned to leave.

"Harry, aren't you forgetting something?"

"Nope, can't think of anything." replied Harry with fake sincerity.

"Where is the Philosopher's stone, Harry?" prodded Dumbledore.

"I can't tell you that because of security reasons." replied Harry smoothly, got up and left a stunned Headmaster behind. Harry had actually arranged to transfer the stone back to his vault in Gringott's bank. For a pretty penny, Harry had assisted the Goblins to beef up their security with the latest muggle technology. Closed circuit TV, retina scanners, motion detectors, microphones, body heat sensors along with remote controlled weapons and high-tech composite steel vaults made it rather unlikely that either a wizard or a muggle could penetrate their security ever again.

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The school year ended peacefully a few weeks after the Voldemort encounter. Gryffindor easily won the Quidditch cup and sported the most house points. The only noteworthy event occurred on the morning of the departure day, when Hogwarts was awoken from the

noise of a shiny new Dauphin Eurocopter with a red and gold Gryffindor color scheme that landed near the entrance to pick up Harry and his friends. The headmaster was only mildly surprised to learn that Harry owned the helicopter, piloted by two squibs and that he planed to used it regularly to commute to Hogwarts to work in his lab during the summer. Naturally, Dumbledore was informed rather late that construction for a proper Hogwarts heliport would commence next week.

AN: Revised and Expanded by **not2real** and this author deserves all the credit for the improvements. I'd say it was a nice job, better then what I did anyway.

Disclaimer: Torturing one of your Professors may get you expelled.

Total Resistance

Harry thoughts were spinning, he was walking down the steps leading to the Headmaster's office when someone cleared their throat.

"Did he tell you the bloody prophecy?"

"Who . . . Moody?"

"The same, well?"

"He did," Harry confirmed. "Why? Do you know it too?"

"No, but I can guess what it says." Moody said with a shrug. "Listen here, there is no fate but that which we make for ourselves. Prophecies are rarely clear until after they've been carried out and worrying about them is just the sort of idiotic thing that you shouldn't do."

"Oh . . . thanks."

"No problem lad," Moody replied. "Just thought you should get a more balanced idea of how things are. Prophecy can be useful, but most of the time it's not worth sparing the time to hear." With that, Moody turned and began walking away.

"Wait."

"What is it?"

"I just need to know one more thing," Harry said.

"Well?"

"How'd you stay alive for so long with so many people wanting you dead?"

"Ah, well . . . wouldn't tell this to most people. But I suppose you need this information as much as I do. Always have a place to run and always have another way out."

"That's it?"

"That's it," Moody confirmed. "Set up a signal to let anyone important know that you've been made and disappear. If you get captured then try to keep your mouth shut for two days, giving your people more time to run is the gentlemanly thing to do. One more thing."

"Yeah?"

"Emotions are tools and they can be useful," Moody said firmly. "But you have to remember one thing. You are the master of your emotions, your emotions are not the master of you."

"Thanks Moody."

"No problem lad," Moody said with a horrific smile. "No problem at all."

Harry was lost in thought as he wandered back towards his dormitory.

"Harry, there you are." Hermione almost cried in relief. "Where have you been?"

"Hermione, I've got a question for you."

"What is it Harry?" Hermione asked slowly. She was a bit worried by the unnatural calm facade that her best friend had been showing the world, after Sirius's death and with everything that had happened the year before . . .

"How do post owls know where to go? Is there some sort of charm or something?"

"I'm not sure," Hermione replied. "Can I get back to you?"

"Sure thing," Harry agreed. "And make sure the DA knows we're going to have another meeting before the end of the year, I've got something I need to say."

"Ok Harry."

"And I'll need to have a quick meeting with you beforehand," Harry added as he began walking away.

"I'll be sure to arrange things then," Hermione agreed. She was sure of it now, that eerie calm couldn't be natural.

"Thanks Hermione," Harry said as he began walking away. He changed his direction to go towards the owlery.

"Hedwig," he called out. "Got a letter for you to deliver."

"Hoot."

"Take this to Bill girl," Harry said fondly. "And wait for a reply, I'd like this as soon as you can comfortably manage please."

Hedwig hooted in agreement and took off to deliver his letter.

Harry left the owlery and went off in search of his friend, he found her in the library.

"How are you doing?"

"I found the charms they use on post owls," Hermione said in excitement. "At least the major ones."

"Will it work on other birds?"

"Not well," Hermione replied. "At least the ones I found won't, why?"

"Later," Harry said. "For now I need you to work on modifying the Galleons we used to call meetings."

IIIIIIII

"I've learned something," Harry said to the group. "I've learned that the only people I can trust are in this room." Harry looked around at all the faces. "Many of us will be vulnerable during the summer holiday. Because of that, I've asked Hermione to do a quick modification on the galleons, Hermione."

"Tap it three times on heads and once on tails against any hard surface," Hermione said. "It'll turn yellow and vibrate. That is your signal to the rest of the group that you've been spotted or attacked by Death Eaters. It will turn every other Galleon yellow and it will vibrate and heat them up."

"If you see this happen, get rid of your Galleon and go to ground." Harry said firmly. "Run, find a place to hide. If they get one of us then it stands to reason that they'll go after the rest. If you're captured . . . if you're captured, try to hold out for two days. Those two days could mean life or death to your friends, try to keep your mouth shut that long."

The students looked around at each other nervously. "You serious mate?" Ron asked finally.

"I wish I wasn't," Harry said sickly. "I wish this were all a joke."

"Can I add something?" Susan asked.

"Go ahead."

"I suggest that we all divide ourselves into groups of three," Susan said. "Each person in the group will know a place to drop messages to the rest of the group, or several places. We can communicate with other groups by letting each person have another way of contacting one other person from a different group. It'll be slow, but . . ."

"Hard to trace," Harry said with a nod. "I also had Hermione look into the charms they put on post owls and she tells me that it can be put on any bird."

"You think we should all cast it on something before we go home?"

"Owls mean mail, ravens, pigeons, and sparrows . . ."

"Mean ravens, pigeons, and sparrows," Hermione said with a smile of understanding. "Excellent idea Harry. But the spell will only last for a few months when you take account the fact that it was designed for owls. I could modify it but . . ."

"Later," Harry interrupted. "All we need is for it to last until we all come back."

"Ok."

"Guess what we need to do now is split up into our groups," Harry sighed. "Groups of three, any ideas?"

"We can still contact people in other groups can't we?" One of the young Ravenclaws asked.

"Yes," Harry said quickly. "The group of three is just a back up if we have to go to ground. If we do have to go to ground then we'll look at things later."

"Hanna and I are together," Susan said firmly. "And we want you with us."

"I'd sort of planned on being with Ron and Hermione," Harry said weakly.

"Hermione can be your secondary contact," Susan said firmly. "She's comfortable in the muggle world, Ron's not."

"But you're both purebloods, so it would make sense that . . ."

"What would make sense is for our leader to have a back channel to the Head of the DMLE," Susan interrupted. "And Hanna's step mum is muggle born. So that objection doesn't hold water."

"It doesn't make sense to have all our eggs in one basket," Hanna added with a blush. "We need to be sure that the three of you can't all be rolled up at the same time."

"Agree Harry," Hermione whispered to him.

"Why?"

"It's not worth fighting over and they do have some valid points," Hermione whispered. "I'll join up with Ron and Ginny and like they said, you and I can be each other's secondary contacts."



They spent the rest of the meeting working out the details and it was long past curfew when they decided that they had worked out enough to make things work.

"I've thought of this," Harry said loudly. "There aren't any Professors near the common routes and even if there were, I've got a little distraction for them in the Slytherin Dungeons that's about to go off. Remember, we can't say a word about what we decided here . . . goodbye, and good luck."

The meeting broke up and Harry was both surprised and pleased to find Hedwig waiting for him when he got back to his bed. "What have you got for me girl?" She extended her leg and a smile blossomed on his face when he finished the note. Things were looking up.

|||||||

None of the students did anything that would draw any notice until they got off the train at the end of the year. Even then, the confined themselves to a few knowing looks and a few whispered instructions.

The first thing Harry did when he arrived back at his relatives house, indeed the first thing any of the DA did was make up a small pack to be grabbed on the way out the door in case of an attack. It wasn't much, but it was one of the easiest and for some only thing they could do to prepare for what might be coming.

|||||||

"God damn it," Harry said in shock. "God bloody damn it." Looking out his window, he could see a small group of Death Eaters surrounding his old his old babysitter. "Why me?" Harry pulled out his DA Galleon and activated it to warn his comrades. After grabbing the pack that he'd made up for the occasion and letting Hedwig out of her cage, he took a moment to consider his next move.

Harry knew he had a choice to make. He could either run and take his chances, or he could try to rescue the old woman . . . Harry sighed, no one ever accused him of doing the smart thing."

He saw Vernon's wallet on the way out of the house and emptied it into his pocket after a second of thought. Harry he decided that the two hundred pounds he found in it could be considered his severance pay. He didn't even entertain the thought of warning his relatives, it wasn't like he cared and the few minutes wasted on that could mean life or death later.

|||||

Hermione looked at the yellow Galleon in horrified shock before her brain restarted. "MUM, DAD." She screamed. "We gotta get out of here now."

"What is is darling?" Her mother asked seriously.

"Someone just got attacked," Hermione replied. "Hurry up, we gotta get out of here now. We could be next."

"I'll throw some clothes in a bag," her father suggested. "It'll all be find darling."

"No it won't," Hermione disagreed with a glance at the coin. "I don't think it'll ever be fine ever again."

|||||

"Where's Potter?" Lucius demanded harshly. "Crucio, tell me you stupid bitch."

"N . . . no," Fig groaned. Her throat was raw from all the screaming.

"CRUCIO," he growled. "Talk."

"N . . . never," she whispered. "I won't talk . . . I won't talk."

"Guess we'll have to continue then," Lucius sneered. He kicked the old Squib in the ribs a few times. "Crucio, you'll talk you filthy bitch. I pr . . ."

Harry stood behind the fallen Death Eater holding a rock in a sock. Taking a few seconds to admire his work, he raised his arm and

brought his impromptu weapon down again and again, ruining the man's face and once perfect smile.

"Gotta get you outta here," Harry muttered to himself as he looked over the old woman. "Maybe . . . Ms. Fig, can you hear me?"

"H'ry?"

"That's right," he agreed. "It's Harry, I'm gonna put you somewhere and then I'm gonna try to lead them off."

"R'n H'ry," the old woman gasped. "R'n."

"As soon as I get you hidden," Harry agreed. After dragging the old woman under a privacy hedge, he took the time to rob Lucius of anything that might be even remotely useful.

"Reducto." He hit one of the Death Eaters in the chest with a spell from Lucius's wand. "Reducto." Harry dodged the return spells and took off running. It was ironic that he had the Dudley to thank for the fact that he was doing so well in this fight, Harry almost laughed at the thought as he dove behind a tree to avoid another curse. Who'd have thought that all those years of running from Dudley, all those years of learning every escape rout and hiding place within three miles of the house would come in handy.

IIIIIIII

Safe in her hotel room, Hermione wrote two numbers on a piece of parchment before attaching it to her messenger bird's leg.

"What are you doing darling?"

"Letting people know I'm still alive," Hermione replied. "The numbers don't mean anything unless they go to my two contacts. They'll add me to the list they've got and send it along to everyone. If they can reply, the person that started the alarm will include a detailed note explaining what happened. With any luck, we'll find out that someone was playing around with their coin and everything we did was for nothing."

Her parents watched as she spent the remainder of the night and a good part of the next day writing a list of names. And their worry grew as she became paler and paler as the time passed.

"Well . . . do you know what happened?"

"It wasn't an accident," Hermione said in a small voice. "Least I don't think it was. One person hasn't reported in."

"Anyone we know?"

"Harry," Hermione sobbed.

IIIIIIIIII

*Mr. Grimwald,*

*Enclosed is a list of properties that meet your criteria.*

*Bagers and Spudd Realestate*

Harry glanced over the list and was pleased to find a property that seemed to fit his needs. It was an old abandoned lighthouse that someone had attempted to turn into a tower. The problem was that they'd gone a bit overboard when they'd applied the wards and it could only be accessed at high or low tide. Had Moody been there, he'd have no doubt explained the value of a back door and that it was never a good idea to limit your mobility so much. As it was, Harry had no one to counsel him against it and he purchased the lonely structure. One could only hope that the mistake wouldn't prove to be too costly.

IIIIIIIIII

Susan's heart was pounding as she checked the dead drop she and Hanna had set up with Harry. It had been two weeks since the boy had disappeared and they were all beginning to fear the worst.

"All you had to do was give us two days," Susan whispered to herself. "Then you could have told them everything they wanted to know." Hanna had begged her not to check the message box, had said that

not even Harry could keep that back for two weeks. Susan agreed, but she knew one thing that her friend didn't. So long as the drop was clear, Harry hadn't talked and there was a chance . . . there was a chance that the boy was still alive.

"Harry you dummy," she muttered again. "You stupid stupid boy."

"Glad to know I was missed," Harry's dry voice shocked her out of her day dream. "It's good to see you too Susan."

"Harry?" She gasped. "Oh Harry you're alive."

"For now," he agreed.

"Auntie told me what happened at your house," Susan babbled. "They found the old lady and what's left of Malfoy's dad but they didn't find anyone else. She said it looked like they got you and we were all so worried."

"Is that why you've been checking this thing?" Harry demanded. "Susan, you know the rules."

"If someone gets burned, they're out." Susan said in a monotone. "We had to be sure, Hanna is watching from somewhere."

"Then she should have stopped you," Harry said firmly. "Damn it Susan, if they had gotten me then this little stunt of yours would have let them take you too . . . might have even gotten Hanna."

"Well they didn't," Susan maintained. "It's good to see you Harry."

"Good to see you too," Harry agreed. "Let's go meet up with Hanna, I'll treat you two to coffee and we can catch up on old times."

"Ok," she agreed.

"Do either of you need to be anywhere in the next few hours?" Harry asked as they went to rejoin their friend.

"No why?"

"Hermione's drop had a request for a face to face in a park not far from here," Harry explained. "I agreed. The meet is in two hours, and I was hoping . . ."

"Sure," Susan agreed. "I'd love to see Hermione."

"Assuming it's her," Harry said firmly.

"Why wouldn't it be?" Susan asked. "She wasn't captured was she?"

"No," Harry replied. "But Death Eaters aren't the only ones that want me, can't be too careful."

IIIIIIIIII

"I didn't see Hermione," Susan whispered. "But I did see Snape, think it's a trap?"

"I think it's unlikely that Snape decided to take a walk through this park an hour before Hermione asked me to meet her," Harry agreed.

"Death Eater?"

"He is, Order too."

"What do you want to do?"

"I want to take him if possible," Harry replied. "We'll decide what else to do based on what he says."

They circled around behind the man and he motioned for his companions to circle around to flank their most hated Professor.

Harry dropped to the ground and did his best impression of a green snake, trying to avoid being spotted as he crept up on the potions master. Using Lucius's wand, he hit the man with a quick stunning charm.

"Grab his legs," Susan said to Hanna. "Let's get him into that shed."

IIIIIIIIII

"You sure this will work Professor?" Remus asked.

"Someone replied to that message," Dumbledore agreed. "Either Harry or Voldemort. I think we have a good chance of either bringing Harry home or avenging him."

"How much time do we have?"

"Half an hour until anyone is supposed to show up," Dumbledore replied. "Plenty of time to get ready."

IIIIIIII

"Hello Snape."

"Potter," Snape hissed. "I demand that you let me go right now."

"Why were you in the park?" Harry asked calmly.

"Let me go Potter," Snape screamed. "You bloody arrogant fool."

"Ever heard of the shatter bone hex?" Harry said as he placed the tip of his wand against Snape's knee. "I'm told that it was invented in America so I wouldn't be surprised if you didn't. The Ministry does its best to keep spells with non latin incantations out. They even went so far as to appoint a Deputy Minister of Incantation Purity to insure that publishers are made aware of that putting the 'wrong sort' of spell in their books would be a bad idea."

"I'm well aware of all that Potter," Snape growled. "Now release me."

"So you know about the hex then? Good, now here's what I'm going to do. I am going to ask you a few questions, if you refuse to answer . . . well, you'll walk with a limp for the rest of your life. If I find out you lied to me, you'll have a very short life. Understand?"

"You can't do this Potter," Snape said in shock.

"Now, why were you in the park?"

"You don't have the guts," Snape said with false calm.

"One more chance, why were you in the park?"

"Go ahead Potter," Snape sneered. "Show me what a big tough wizard you are. Now let me go and I won't punish you too much for your impudence."

"Shatterbone," Harry cast the spell and destroyed one of Snape's joints. "Want to try again?"

"Blast you Potter," Snape screamed. "I'll see you in Azkaban for that."

"Why were you in the park?" Harry persisted.

"Looking for you, you bloody fool."

"Why?"

"The Headmaster wants you back with your relatives," Snape said through clenched teeth.

"How did you learn about my dead drop?" After a few minutes Harry dug the tip of his wand into the man's knee. "I asked you a question Professor."

"I'm a Master Legilimens," Snape replied weakly. "Even a dunder head like you should be able to figure out what happened."

"Thank you," Harry said. "Stupefy, Petrificus Totalus, Incarcerous."

"What do you want to do now Harry?" Susan asked sickly.

"Do you know any medical charms?"

"A few."

"Stop the bleeding and do what you can to stabilise him," Harry said. "We need to figure out a way to extract everyone from the Order's clutches."

"I could ask if they want to go shopping?" Hanna suggested weakly. "We stun the guards and disappear."



"Contact your secondaries and tell them to do the same," Harry said firmly. "Gather as many people together as you can. I want us to have the edge on numbers when we do this." The girls agreed and left to carry out their instructions. "What the hell is happening to me?" Harry asked himself.

|||||

"Hello Hermione."

"Hello Luna," Hermione said to the face in the fireplace. "How'd you get this floo address?"

"Father does some work for the Order," Luna explained. "I was wondering if you'd like to go shopping?"

"I don't know Luna."

"Please," Luna begged. "It'd be fun for all of us, you, Ronald, Ginny, and myself."

"Well . . ."

"With Harry missing we all need to find some way to keep our minds off what could be happening," Luna said firmly.

"Alright Luna," Hermione agreed. "I'll call you back to arrange everything."

"I'll be waiting."

|||||

"Response time is four minutes if we're lucky," Susan said to the assembled group. "Three if we're not."

"How many do you think will show up?"

"One team of three to start with," Susan replied. "More will trickle in as they can."

"Ok," Harry sighed. "I think this is still doable, here's how I see this happening . . ."

|||||

"Girls go shopping, boys don't." Ron said firmly.

"Oh grow up," Hermione growled.

"You have an excuse," Ron said. "Books, you might also want to talk about homework. Can you really see me agreeing to join a group of girls on a shopping trip?"

"Oh," Hermione said in a small voice. "Now what?"

"Now we all put on smiles and avoid everyone's eyes while we go out," Ginny offered. "Now we escape to think of a way to free Ron."

"Good luck," Ron said as he turned away. "Tell Harry hi for me." He was a bit disappointed that they'd accepted his reason so easily, but that was Hermione. She never seemed to notice the small things, the details like why the best chess player in their house got some of the worst grades. Ah well, Ron smiled to himself. It was best to let her keep her illusions, he'd rejoin them as soon as his job was completed. Harry needed to know what the Order's plans were, and the best way to keep him informed was the bugs that Ron has so meticulously spread through most of the house. "Few more rooms and a way to keep the pipe open and I'm all set," he muttered to himself.

|||||

"How ya' doing Ron?"

"Good Professor," Ron replied. "Wish there wasn't so much cleaning to do . . . kinda wish I went shopping with the girls. It'd have to be better than this." He palmed the bug he was going to plant in the baseboard, still not confident enough in his skills to do it under an Order member's nose.

"I'm actually sort of surprised that Hermione went along with them," Remus said thoughtfully.

"Don't say that to her when she gets back," Ron said quickly.

"Why not?"

"It's just . . . don't tell her I said this, but she's finally figured out that she's a girl. I think she wanted to . . . you know, talk with other girls about . . . stuff?"

"I see," Remus said with a smile. He'd have to tell the others that their concerns were unfounded. "Well, they get like that when they get to that age."

"If you say so."

"Still no word from Harry?"

"Nope," Ron agreed. "We're all getting really worried about him, you sure he wasn't captured?"

"We're fairly sure," Remus confirmed. "It's like he just . . . disappeared."

IIIIIIIIII

Warned by instincts sharpened by years of paranoia, Moody's wand was half way out of its holster before the first stunner hit him.

"Ten seconds," Susan called loudly. The air around her was filled with stunners.

"Hurry up," Harry said loudly. "Check their arms and tie up anyone that has a mark."

"Thirty seconds," Susan called out.

"I've got one," Hanna said. "Should we rob them too?"

"Do it," Harry agreed. "How long?"

"One minute," Susan replied loudly.

They went through the rest of the fallen, finding and binding two more Death Eaters.

"Everyone that's staying needs to go back to where they were when this started now," Harry said firmly. "Stun them."

"TIME," Susan called out. "TWO MINUTES, WE NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE NOW."

"Let's go," Harry ordered. "Into London, GO GO GO."

The Aurors arrived as the last student made it out the door of the Leaky Cauldron. "What in the hell happened here?" One of them whispered in shock. "My god, they even got Moody."

"They're just stunned," another added with a relieved smile. "Cept for these three."

"Look at their arms."

"Arrest them and wake everyone else up, we need to find out what happened here."

AN: Thanks go to dogbertcarroll for a bit of help with this. As this story is, it's half outline and half writing. I'd need to fill a lot of gaps before making this a story, at a guess it's about ten to fifteen chapters condensed into one right now. As with the majority of the fics and fragments in Odd Ideas, this is open to any who might want it. The title of this fic was stolen from a book written by a Swiss officer about fifty years ago, it's good if a bit dated.

OMAKE: Disappeared

"Professor Granger?"

"What is it Ms. Harper?"

"You knew Harry Potter didn't you?"

"I did yes," Hermione replied with a nostalgic smile. "Quite well too."

"What was he like?"

"Harry was a sweet boy that seemed so innocent until you saw him in a crisis," Hermione replied. "Give him a problem and you'll see why he became a legend . . . he would have hated to hear me say that about him, all he ever wanted was a nice quiet life."

"Did he get it?"

"No one knows," she said sadly. "He just disappeared."

"Do you think he's still alive?"

"I like to think he found what he was looking for."

OMAKE: Happy Birthday

"Happy birthday Harry," the common room cheered as he walked down the steps.

"You do know it was a month ago don't you?" Harry asked.

"We thought it would be a good idea to have a party," Lavender explained.

"And that was as good an excuse as we could think of," Parvati agreed. "We'll have Neville's in a few weeks and so on."

"Everyone that had their birthday over the summer."

"Oh . . . ok."

"And after a little thought," Parvati began with a smile. "We've found a way of getting you what you've always dreamed of having."

"Really?" Harry said in delight. "Let's go find your sister, I want to get started enjoying my present as soon as I can."

"What?" Lavender asked in confusion. "Your present doesn't have anything to do with Parvati."

"But the only other set of identical twins is . . ." Harry looked at Fred and George in horrified shock. "Now listen guys, you're my friends but that's all you are . . . friends. Got it?"

"Doesn't have anything to do with us mate," Fred said quickly.

"Oh . . . that's a relief," Harry sighed. "So what is it girls?"

"Your very own grooming kit," Lavender said with a pleased smile.  
"Go ahead and try it."

"Uh . . . thanks."

"Harry," Parvati whispered into his ear. "We'll go find my sister as soon as the party gets going well enough that they won't notice us leave."

"Thanks Parvati," Harry said with tears flowing down his face. "This is the best birthday ever."

Disclaimer: No spoilers for the book, not even one.

## The Duel

The world spun as Hermione felt someone pushing her into an empty classroom. "Wha . . ." She managed to get out before a strong hand clamped itself on her mouth.

"We're not going to harm you," a female voice hissed. "We just want to talk."

"Mumph."

"Ok," another female voice said, sounding nervous. "I'll have her let you go if you promise to listen to what we say, deal?"

"Mumph."

"I think that was a yes," the first voice said uncertainly.

Hermione felt the hand loosen. "It was," she confirmed. "Now who are you and what do you want?"

"It's Daphne and Tracy."

"You still haven't told me what you want."

The two Slytherins looked at each other. "Have a seat Granger."

"Well?"

"What do you know of pureblood customs?"

"Not much," Hermione admitted. "Why?"

"Draco's father has outmaneuvered our families," Daphne said with a look of disgust. "He offered a couple concessions in exchange for the power to arrange our marriages."

"With the caveat that Draco would not be either of our husbands," Tracy added firmly.

"He found a loop hole I take it?"

"He betrothed us to Malfoy's two goons," Tracy said with a sick look on her face. "Just that was a rather large slap in the face to our respective families."

"But that's not the worst part," Daphne added. "I'm told that the muggle world is more progressive. But in the magical world it all depends on the betrothal contract. Ours states that we would become our husband's chattel. We could not work or own any kind of property without the consent of our husbands. It's quite common among some pureblood families."

"What?" Hermione gasped, a look of shocked horror on her face. "You're kidding?"

"Draco has made it clear that he intends to use us and to make us the common property of his friends," Tracy said with an impassive look on her face. "We would rather this not happen."

"I'll die before I allow that to happen," Daphne said fiercely.

"What do you want me to do?"

"Being property does help us in this instance," Tracy explained. "We can be transferred to another . . . owner in this case without too much fuss. Draco intends to use that to his advantage, we intend to use it to ours."

"How?"

"To put it bluntly, we were hoping that you would help us convince Potter to challenge the goons in a duel."

"Why Harry?" Hermione demanded. "Why not someone else? It couldn't be hard to defeat those two."

"I could defeat those two," Daphne snorted. "I'm not sure I could defeat their champion."



"Which would almost certainly be Draco," Hermione said in understanding. "Still, why Harry?"

"Because Potter is probably the most powerful wizard attending classes right now," Daphne said bluntly. "And the most skilled duelist. Neither of us are willing to take chances here, it's either Potter or someone from outside."

"Potter is . . . from what we know he'd treat us well," Tracy sighed. "Someone from outside might not. And it's not like we could ask one of the Professors."

"Why not?"

"Everything happening to us is nice and legal," Daphne replied. "They couldn't even challenge the goons to a duel of their own without resigning first, old Hogwarts rule prevents it."

"I've seen it," Hermione interjected. "Without it I'm sure Snape would have challenged Harry in first year. What makes you think they'll accept Harry's terms?"

"Draco would never pass up the chance to mess Potter up," Tracy sniffed. "And we don't think you'd let Potter sell us off or offer us up in a duel of his own."

"I'll talk to Harry," Hermione promised. "But he might not do anything."

"Have him come down and talk to us," Daphne said quickly. "We'll be here for the next few hours. And if need be . . . well, I suppose we could give him a sample if we must."

"A . . . sample?" Hermione squeaked.

"Think of it as an advance," Tracy agreed. "If necessary we'll give him as much as our betrothal contracts will allow us to give to anyone that isn't one of the goons."

"But . . ."

"Hermione," Daphne said firmly. "What would you be willing to do for anyone that could prevent you from being the communal toy of Draco, the goons, and god knows who else."

"Point taken."

"I rather thought it might be."

"I'll be right back," Hermione said. "Just wait."

"Thank you Granger."

They watched as Hermione left and turned to each other. "You think he'll go for it?" Daphne asked.

"I think so," Tracy agreed. "If all else fails we can always kill ourselves."

"Too bad we can't do things the old fashioned way."

"True . . . a shame it would violate the agreements if we kill them. It really would be much simpler."

"He closed that loophole for a reason . . . the bastard."

"Yeah . . ." After that, they waited in silence for their savior to arrive.

Harry walked into the room a few minutes later and regarded the two girls with an unreadable look. "Hermione says that the two of you have something you want to ask me?"

"Just listen to them Harry," Hermione pleaded.

"Well?"

"Do you know anything about pureblood marriage laws?"

"Not a thing," Harry replied.

The two girls took a breath and appraised Harry of the situation.

"That's the situation," Daphne finished.

"If you win, we're yours, please Harry."

"You can do anything with us," Daphne added. "If you want to pass us around to all your Gryff buddies, then you can. I'd prefer not to be treated that way of course, but legally there would be nothing that I or anyone else could do about it."

"I . . . I wouldn't do that to you," Harry said with a blush.

"Which was one of the reasons we chose you," Daphne said gently. "We figured that you'd treat us decently, that you wouldn't turn us into prostitutes or party favors like Draco intends to anyway."

"We didn't think Granger would let you even if you were so inclined," Tracy added with a weak smile. "Or that she'd at least raise enough hell to give you pause."

"That's the situation," Daphne sighed. "You've got the power, you've got the ability, and we hope that you'll treat us well."

"What do you think Hermione?"

"You're living a lot of boys dream," Hermione said with a shrug. "The fact that you're uncertain about it does you credit, but . . . but if I were in their situation I'd be asking you, no begging you for the same thing."

"How do I do this?" Harry said in defeat.

"Just challenge Crabbe and Goyle in a duel with us as the stakes," Daphne replied. "Mention that they're allowed to name a champion and Draco will stumble over himself to agree."

"Might be a good idea to suggest that things can be settled after the meal," Tracy added. "Traditionally the time and place is named by the challenger. It's not likely that Draco will chose anything aside from magic, but it is possible that he'll want to use something else."

"Sneer and imply that he's unsure of his magical powers if he does," Daphne suggested. "Unless you're confident you could beat him with a blade or something."

"I don't know anything about how to have a duel," Harry said.

"We'll be in your corner," Daphne assured him. "I'll whisper anything you need to know."

"Shall we go?"

"Sooner the better," Tracy agreed quickly. "Thank you Harry."

"Yes thank you," Daphne added.

They followed Harry down to the Great Hall and watched as he walked up to the Slytherin table. "Crabbe, Goyle. I challenge the two of you idiots to a duel with your betrothed as the spoils." A hush fell over the Great Hall as the students and staff stopped to watch the developing situation.

"Can they appoint a champion?" Draco asked hopefully.

"They can," Harry said firmly. "Are you volunteering?"

"It'll be a pleasure to wipe that smirk off your face scarhead," Draco said happily. "Shall we say, the third floor at . . ."

"It's traditional for the challenger to name the time and place," Harry interjected. "Or did your parents neglect to instruct you in that bit of etiquette."

"I knew Potter," Draco said quickly.

"Then you were trying to take advantage of my ignorance?" Harry said before Draco had a chance to reply. "Have you no honor?"

"Where and when Potter," Draco hissed.

"Here, after the meal."

"I'll be here Potty," Draco agreed. "Be ready to die."

Without a word, Harry turned and walked back to the group of nervous girls. "What now?"

"Now Dumbledore comes over and tries to talk you out of it," Hermione said with a smile.

"What makes you say that?"

"May I have a moment of your time Harry?"

Harry turned to find Dumbledore walking up with a grave expression on his face. "Never mind. What did you need Professor?"

"Alone . . ."

"I'm busy at the moment," Harry said thoughtfully. "Perhaps later, after the last meal."

"I'm afraid the information is time sensitive."

"Then I am afraid that you'll have to talk here or forget it," Harry replied. "I have an appointment coming up that I can't miss."

"Yes . . . that was what I wished to speak with you about," Dumbledore said sadly. "Harry . . . I fear that you might not know what you're getting into. As you have chosen to challenge Mr. Malfoy in public before witnesses and as he has chosen to accept. The only way we can resolve this is for you to offer up an apology, Severus assures me that . . ."

"No."

"But people could be injured," Dumbledore said in a grandfatherly tone. "Surely you don't want that?"

"Have Draco forfeit and no one will get hurt," Harry said stubbornly. "Now if you will excuse me, I'd like to relax before we begin."

"Very well," Dumbledore said with a disappointed look on his face. "Goodbye Harry."

"I can't say that was unexpected," Harry muttered. "Now what?"

"Now we rub your shoulders for a few minutes to get you limber," Daphne said firmly. "Hermione, could you get his wand hand and wrist?"

"I . . . alright," she agreed. "You owe me for this Harry."

"We're keeping score then?"

"Never mind," she laughed. "Or rather, if we are then we can start by counting all the essays that I helped you research and edited."

"Touche."

"Here comes Draco," Tracy said nervously. "The first thing you need to do is open your shirt to show you're not wearing any armor. After that, bow and begin. Good luck Harry."

"Remember Harry," Daphne whispered. "You can legally kill him in this duel and Draco will most certainly try to kill you. Don't show any mercy and don't let up. Remember Harry, if you loose you're killing Tracy and myself. Please, please don't loose."

"I won't," Harry assured the frightened girls.

With a deep breath, Harry took his position and opened his shirt to show a bare chest. "How about you Malfoy? You wearing any armor?"

"Damn you Potter, how dare you imply I'd do something like that." Draco was white faced with rage.

"Wearing armor would violate the code," Flitwick said sternly.

"I'm not wearing any armor," Draco growled.

"Prove it," Harry challenged.

"I refuse to debase myself by doing such a vulgar act," Draco protested. "And I am greatly offended by the fact that you're challenging my, a Malfoy's honor."

"The challenge would be to find any honor in the Malfoy family," Harry retorted. "We're all waiting Draco."

"Is this all really necessary?" Dumbledore asked.

"Yes," Harry said firmly. "It is. Unless . . ."

"Unless?"

"Unless we change the terms so that armor doesn't matter," Harry mused. "In that case, I suppose I'd use spells that couldn't be blocked."

"You'd really . . ." Dumbledore gasped.

"Your choice Draco," Harry growled.

"No . . . no I won't have that spell cast in these halls," Dumbledore interrupted. "Open your shirt Mr. Malfoy."

Draco's hands were shaking when he unbuttoned his shirt to reveal black dragon hide.

"Looks like I win then," Harry said with a satisfied smile. "Malfoy violated the code duello, he loses."

"We still have one more duel Potter," Draco sneered.

"Why don't we have it now then?" Harry suggested. "Providing of course you remove your little vest."

"Damn you Potter," Draco hissed.

"Was that a yes?" Harry asked. "Be back in fifteen minutes or forfeit you bloody coward."

Harry returned to his corner and the girls immediately set him down to massage the tension out of his muscles. "You have to relax," Daphne advised. "Please, you're better than him. It's not worth getting worked up about."

"He's rubbish at anything but potions," Tracy agreed. "And he only does well there because Snape cooks his grades. You've got nothing to worry about, just close your eyes and relax."

"Want something to drink mate?"

Harry opened his eyes to focus on his oldest friend. "Thanks Ron."

"No problem mate, shame Malfoy is such a coward."

"I still have one more duel to fight," Harry assured him. "I'll bust him up real good for you then."

"Thanks mate."

"Somethings happening," Hermione whispered. "Snape is talking to Dumbledore."

IIIIIIII

"You're sure you can finish this without harming him?" Dumbledore demanded.

"I believe so," Snape assured the man. While he had no intention of leaving Potter able to walk under his own power, it was important to tell the old fool otherwise.

"We were lucky on the first duel," Dumbledore sighed. "We may not be on the second. Remember Severus, as educators it is our duty to insure that none of the students are harmed."

"Of course Headmaster."

"Change of plans Potter," Snape said loudly. "I'll be facing you in the next duel."

"According to 'Hogwarts a History,' it is strictly forbidden for students to duel Professors," Hermione replied before Harry had a chance to.

"Unless the Headmaster gives his permission," Dumbledore said with a smile. "It's really for the best."



While Hermione was arguing with the Headmaster, Daphne was whispering something into Harry's ear.

"To the death then," Harry said loudly.

"What?" Dumbledore asked sickly. "You can't mean that Harry."

"I couldn't set that term on my duel with Draco," Harry corrected. "As a full grown wizard, I can make that term to Snape. One of us won't be leaving this place outside of a box Snivvy."

"I've been waiting . . ."

"I forbid it," Dumbledore shouted.

"Then Draco has . . . three minutes to get here," Harry said with Daphne's prompting. "And let me add how disappointed I am with you Headmaster. It's rather disconcerting to see you go against me on this, bends the code duello rather badly too."

"He's right," Professor Flitwick said reluctantly. "Perhaps it would be best if you were to stay out of this Albus."

"I . . ."

"I'm here Potter," Draco shouted as he came into the Great Hall.

"With ten seconds to spare," Harry said with a glance at the clock. "Are you ready Draco?"

"Ready Pothead."

"Then let's see you open your shirt."

"You can't really think . . ."

"You've shown that you are a coward and bereft of even a shread of honor," Harry repeated what Tracy was whispering into his ear. "Under normal circumstances I'd have skipped the duel and thrashed you. But these aren't normal circumstances, now let us see if you are wearing any armor Draco."

"Damn you Potter." Draco's hands were trembling with rage as he exposed his chest.

"Let's get started then."

"You're supposed to return my bow Potter," Draco sneered.

"I don't respect you," Harry replied. "Why should I even pretend."

"Because it is required by the code," Professor Flitwick said sharply.

"Very well," he said dramatically as he gave the barest hint of a nod towards his opponent's direction.

"Adursum." A jet of flame shot out of Draco's wand towards Harry.

Contego Asper." A shield of ice appeared before Harry. "Contrecto Poena." Caused Draco to drop his wand and scream in pain. "Concussu." Caused Draco's eyes to roll into the back of the head and ended the fight. "I suggest you get him to the hospital wing," Harry said. "And it appears that I win again."

"Oh thank you Harry," Daphne and Tracy sobbed as they embraced the wizard.

"No problem," Harry whispered to them. "What do I have to do to set you guys free?"

"Die," Daphne said bluntly. "Or kill us."

"What?"

"You can't break the contract," Tracy explained. "You're stuck with us."

AN: Been reading too many similar stories.

OMAKE: Fifteen points . . . or What if Sirius Thought Things Through.

Harry saw red when Vernon's sister bad mouthed his mother and just as he was about to loose control, a half starved man rushed into the yard.

"NEVER, NEVER, SAY ANYTHING ABOUT LILY POTTER AROUND ME." The obviously insane man screamed. "May I borrow your wand for a second Harry?" His manner shifted from demented to polite in a split second.

"Who are you?"

"Your godfather," the man replied. "I've been in prison for the past few years for murder, but I've escaped now and I'll make everything better. Starting with them."

Harry had to think things over, who did he trust more? An escaped and probably insane convict, or the Dursleys? "I'll be right back," Harry said after a second of thought. "What was your name again?"

"Sirius Black," he replied. "They say I betrayed your parents and murdered several people."

"Did you?"

"I'd never betray your parents," Sirius said firmly. "But I will kill the rat that did . . . slowly."

"Good enough," Harry agreed. He didn't trust the drooling mad man, but since he wasn't a Dursley, Harry was willing to give him the benefit of doubt.

Harry returned a few minutes later and handed his wand to the drooling mad man. "Thank you Harry."

"What are you going to do to them?"

"Figured I'd turn your aunt into a giraffe, your uncle into a pig, and your cousin into another so we'd have a matching set."

"And Marge?"

"Pile of dung for the pigs," Sirius giggled.

"Sounds good," Harry agreed. "So when can we get out of here?"

"You wanna go now?" Sirius shifted gears. "I know a great beach . . . we used to go there with your mum and the rest of our friends . . . portus." Sirius turned a bit of string into a portkey. "Let's go Harry."

|||||

"What?" Dumbledore asked dully.

"Taken by Sirius Black?" McGonagall squeaked. "Oh no."

"How are we going to tell the children," Molly wailed.

"He might still be alive," Remus said stubbornly. "We've got to go look for him." The Order had been reassembled and they would not rest until Harry Potter was found and Sirius Black brought to justice.

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Sirius squinted at the note in his hands, why didn't he remember anything? Shrugging off the feeling, he decided that, he might as well follow the instructions laid out for him. Not like he had anything better to do . . . did he?

It took less than an hour to reach the home of his old partner and he was pleased . . . pleased, and a little disappointed if he was going to be honest with himself that she hadn't removed his access from the wards. Ghosting through the house, he found her old bedroom, drew his wand, and cleared his throat.

"Who's there?"

"Hello Amy."

"Sirius?" She asked in shock. "You're under arrest."

"I know," Sirius said calmly. "I came here to turn myself in."

"If you came here to turn yourself in, then why are you holding a wand on me?" She asked dryly.

"Just wanted to make one request before I turn it over," Sirius replied. "Peter, James, and I all became animaguses so we could spend time with Remus during . . . uh . . ."

"That time of the month?"

"Yeah," Sirius agreed with a weak smile. "Peter turned into a rat, he's the pet of the Weasley boy."

"And you want me to do what?"

"Use truth potions or spells on him," Sirius replied. "And make sure he pays for betraying Lily and James."

"You're saying you're innocent?"

"I'm saying it doesn't matter if I'm innocent," Sirius sighed. "Not anymore, not after all the time I spent in Azkaban. All that matters is that he's guilty."

"I'll see to it Sirius," she agreed softly.

"Here." Sirius handed over his wand. "One more thing."

"What is it?"

"Why the hell was I still keyed to the wards?" Sirius demanded. "I know I taught you better than that. You can't make mistakes like that, as head of the DMLE you've got a big target on your head."

"But I didn't make any mistakes," she replied smugly.

"You didn't?"

"Now Auror Tonks," Amelia said with a smile.

"Wha . . ." Sirius crumpled to the ground as the stunner impacted.

"I love it when a plan comes together," Amelia said in contentment. "You can stop looking like my niece whenever you like."

"Thanks boss," Tonks said as her features shifted back to normal.  
"Think he was telling the truth?"

"I hope so," Amelia admitted. "No one was more surprised then I was to hear of his betrayal."

"He was your partner wasn't he?"

"Partner and trainer," Amelia agreed. "He graduated in the class ahead of me and that qualified him to be the senior Auror partnered with a rookie in those dark days."

"It was that bad?"

"It was worse."

AN: Sirius doesn't know where Harry is, doesn't even remember rescuing him. Just woke up with a note in his own hand writing telling him what to do.

OMAKE: The Oath

A storm was raging over Harry's summer residence. Things had gotten so bad that Vernon had packed up the family and left to find a hotel, Petunia just hadn't felt that it was safe enough for widdle Dudders and after Harry had made a few sly comments on the fact that the storm might not be natural. The Dursley family had packed up and left him to some well deserved alone time.

Harry was just settling down to dinner, when what sounded like a body crashed into the front door.

"What the?" Harry exclaimed in surprise when he saw the wet and obviously female form on his doorstep.

"Harry," the girl said. Clutching him as if he were a life preserver. "I'm yours, I swear it upon my magic, loyal unto death . . . unto death." She repeated as she passed out.

"Well . . . I suspect that there's a story behind this," he muttered to himself as he dragged the soaked girl in front of the fireplace.

AN: Not sure who the girl is, and I'm not sure why this scene popped into my head. Could be Hermione, escaped from Dumbledore's control and replacing him with Harry while she can. Could be one of the sisters Black, though I've seen that done far too many times. Could even be a perfect stranger with reasons of her own.

OMAKE: It was all a Prank

"Ready to die Tom?" Harry hissed. It had taken years of fighting and constant sacrifice, but he was finally on the verge of defeating his arch nemesis.

"One thing before you end it Potter," Voldemort replied. "Do you know what day it is? It's april fools day."

"What's that have to do with anything?"

"April fools," James called out as he came out of his hiding place. "Surprise son."

"Wha?"

"You should see the look on your face," Lily laughed.

"Mum?"

"Who else could it be Harry?" Sirius asked.

"I . . ."

"Why don't you all explain what's happening?" Dumbledore suggested.

"Well," James began. "We were all sitting around one day and I said, you know what guys . . . why don't we prank the hell out of Harry before he's had a chance to do anything to us. Something so good that he'll never top it."

"It took some doing, but we managed to convince the entire wizarding world to go along with it." Sirius added. "Do you know how much work it is to fake all those history books?"

"It would have all unraveled if we hadn't kept you locked up all summer," Dumbledore added proudly. "That was my doing."

"But . . . I . . ."

"Admit it Harry," James said. "We got you."

AN: If you haven't read the last book yet, sorry about the spoiler in this one. It's pretty much exactly what happens. And as this was posted before the last book started being sold, it just goes to show that my skilz is 2-1337.



Disclaimer: This has nothing to do with you, move along.

Working him in Shifts

"Parvati," Harry called out. "Can I talk with you for a moment?"

"What do you want?" Parvati replied hotly.

"I just wanted to apologize for the way I acted at the Yule ball," Harry explained. "It was wrong of me to act that way and I should have paid more attention to you, especially since I was lucky enough to have such a pretty witch as my date."

"You think I'm pretty?" Parvati's tone warmed up, "I accept your apology with one condition."

"What?"

"You must give me some good dates to make up for the bad one." The girl said with a smile, "is that acceptable to you?"

"It is," Harry answered. "When do you want to have our first date?"

"Right now," Parvati replied. "We can go out walking on the castle grounds."

"Sure," Harry agreed.

The young couple spent the next hour walking around the castle grounds and eventually made their way back to the entrance hall.

"I had a great time Harry," Parvati said with a grin. "I shall look forward to our next date with great anticipation."

"Me too," Harry agreed quickly. "When do you want to meet?"

"How about the same time tomorrow?" Parvati suggested.

"Sure," Harry replied.

"See you then," Parvati said with a grin. Blushing, the girl gave Harry a quick kiss on the lips and then darted out of the room.

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"How was it?" Padma greeted her sister as she entered the room.

"Much better than the ball," Parvati replied. "I think he could be a great boyfriend."

"Mind sharing?" Padma asked with a raised eyebrow. "The pickings are rather slim in this castle."

"That they are," Parvati agreed. "And I don't think it will be too arduous to share with you. We are sisters, and we share everything else."

"Thank you," Padma said with a grateful smile. "So tell me all the details."

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Harry paced nervously as he waited for his date to arrive. A thousand thoughts raced through his mind, chief among them was his worry that she had changed her mind or chosen not to come to get him back for his earlier behavior.

"There you are," Padma called out. "I'm sorry I'm late but I wanted to look my best."

"That's ok," Harry replied with a relieved smile. "I'm just glad you could come."

"I wouldn't miss it," Padma said.

"There's something different about you Parvati," Harry mused.

"Why would you say that?" Padma replied nervously.

"I don't know, I just . . . you did something with your hair?" Harry asked with false confidence.

"I'm so glad you noticed," Padma said with a relieved smile. "You're such a good boyfriend."

"I try," Harry replied modestly. "And I had Dobby pack a picnic for us."

"Who?"

"Dobby is a house elf I rescued from the Malfoy family," Harry explained. "I'll introduce you later."

"Thanks Harry."

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"I'll be right back Harry," Parvati said as she kissed Harry.

"Ok Parvati," Harry agreed.

The girl got up and walked around the corner to meet her twin. "Ok, it's your hour now."

"Thanks," Padma said with a smile. "Anything I need to know?"

"Nothing too important."

"Ok."

"Wait," Parvati said quickly. "You forgot to change your robes."

"Thank you sister." Padma changed her robes with a flick of her wand and went off to rejoin Harry.

"Did you change your hair again?" Harry asked.

"Yes I did, it's so good of you to notice these things."

"I do my best," Harry said modestly. He still wasn't sure why his girlfriend was always changing her hair style. Seemed like she did it every day, sometimes several times a day. And where did she get all that energy? It was like she could walk off and come back a few minutes later ready to do anything. "You . . . you don't take Pepper Up Potions do you?"

"Why do you ask that?" Padma asked with a frown.

"You walk off and you've got so much energy when you come back," Harry explained. "I was just curious."

"Yoga," Padma said firmly. She raised her foot to touch the top of her head. "See?"

"Woah . . . could you teach me that?"

"Of course my love," Padma agreed. "Would you like to start now?"

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"So . . . you're dating my daughters are you?"

"Well . . ." Harry frowned for a minute before chalking it up to poor English. "Yes sir."

"I see . . . don't you think it's a bit unusual?"

"Why would I sir?" Harry asked with honest confusion. "Is it because we came from different cultures?"

"Hmmm."

"I have to borrow Harry for a bit father," Parvati interjected. "We'll be right back."

"As you wish daughter."

Padma waited until her sister had left the room before turning to their father. "Harry doesn't know he's dating both of us," she confessed.

"What?" He asked in shock. "He hasn't noticed?"

"We've been changing places since the first date," Padma explained. "Sometimes in the middle of a date. He keeps noticing that something is different but he hasn't been able to figure out what."

"You're telling me?" His face turned red and Padma shrunk, expecting him to start yelling. "Bwahahaha. That poor boy."

"Um . . . you're not angry about everything?"

"Not now that I know that it's my wicked daughters taking advantage of a poor innocent boy rather than the other way around as I had originally thought."

AN: Yes, the Patil twins have decided to work Harry in shifts and no they haven't told him about the fact that they're sharing him. I was thinking about turning this into a story or a full sized chapter but I really don't feel the urge to start another project. I might do more with this but I really don't think I could write it as a stand alone, might be a good sub plot in another fic though.

Omake: Hostages

"May I have your attention please?" Harry's voice echoed through the Great Hall. "Now then, Draco Malfoy has been making some threats recently. The jist of them is that Voldemort will kill our families if we stand against him and so on."

"That's a lie," Draco rebutted quickly. "You have no proof."

"Shut up Malfoy," one of the other students spat. "You said that exact thing to me two days ago."

"You can't . . ."

"That's beside the point," Harry interrupted. "I just wanted to point something out to you and your little followers, feel free to pass this along."

"What is it Potter?"

"It may be true that their families are outside the castle and vulnerable to Death Eaters," Harry allowed. "But the reverse is also true. The Death Eaters have children here at Hogwarts. Dumbledore may not have taken advantage of this fact but I will. Listen closely Malfoy, if anyone here looses family to Voldemort then I will kill three of the Death Eaters' children."

"Harry you can't," Dumbledore said quickly. "It would make you just as bad as they are."

"Be silent," Harry disagreed. "Now as I was saying, the first three will be yourself, your bookends . . . and I suppose I'll throw in the Headmaster's pet Death Eater too as a bonus. Do you understand Malfoy?"

"You don't have the guts Potter," Draco said nervously.

"Try me," Harry said coldly. "But you bring up a good point, will I follow through with my threat? Does anyone else have any doubts?"

"You can't scare us Potter," Pansy laughed. "Now run along and stop bothering us."

"Hmmm." Harry scanned the faces in the Great Hall. "I suppose you can think of this as a down payment . . . Reducto." Harry spun and hit Snape in the face with the curse, showering the wall behind with his brains. "You're next Draco," Harry said coldly. "You and your bookends, Pansy and two others after that. Your parents can learn behave or they can find a way to get new heirs."

"Put down your wand Harry," Dumbledore said firmly. "No one else has to get hurt."

"You're right Professor," Harry agreed. "But you'll have to kill me to stop me, are you prepared to do that?"

"It doesn't have to be this way Harry."

"I'm not even going to try to curse you," Harry said thoughtfully. "I'm going to direct my first to Draco, then Pansy, then . . . well I'm not sure if I'll be able to get more than two."

"The Aurors will be here soon," Dumbledore pleaded. "They . . ."

"Will see that I killed a marked Death Eater," Harry interrupted. "The fact that it's Snape will be icing on the cake."

"Harry please . . ."

"One more thing," Harry said loudly. "If they get me then I need someone else to take this up. They get one of ours then I want

someone to make them pay with three. Hostages are useless if you don't take advantage of them."

Disclaimer: The age old purpose of hostages is to assure good behavior by threat of violence. I thought about doing something like this in Old Soldiers but I decided not to.

Omake: Harry's Adventures in Time

"Hmmm," Harry said to himself. "It appears that I've gone back in time somehow. If only Hermione were here, she'd know what to do."

"You should do whatever you want," imaginary Hermione said firmly.

"Really?"

"Yup, I like books right?"

"Yeah."

"And my favorite is Hogwarts a History right?"

"Uh huh."

"Then what could be better than changing history?" She demanded. "It's the best thing you do since it would change the book and that way it'll all be new when I read it again."

"That makes so much sense," Harry said with a smile. "Thanks imaginary Hermione."

"No problem Harry."

"What's going on here?" Another imaginary Hermione walked in. "Why are you dressed like me Luna?"

"No reason."

"She was just telling me to change the past," Harry explained.

"What?" Imaginary Hermione tackled imaginary Luna.

"Yeah," Harry cheered as the two imaginary girls began wrestling and ripping each other's clothing off. "Now if only some imaginary oil would . . . OH GOD YES."

AN: Goes with Pow Right in the Kisser.

Omake: Pow Right in the Kisser

"So why exactly do you hate Potters?" The therapist asked. "It can't all be because of a few school boy pranks."

"I was six years old," Snape said dully. "And I had gotten up to get a drink of water when I heard strange sounds coming from my mother's room."

"Go on."

The past, several years ago.

Harry wasn't sure why he'd gone back in time but he'd decided to enjoy it while it lasted. He had already killed young Tom Riddle and several other people. The whole avoid changing the past had lasted about five minutes. Like Harry had always said, don't look at me funny and I won't kill you. If Tom hadn't wanted to get killed then he should have kept his eyes down. And as for the others? Well, he'd already changed history hadn't he? Wasn't like he could mess up the time line any less was it?

But killing had gotten a bit tedious after a while and Harry had gone pub crawling in search of a diversion of a different sort.

"Hey baby," he said as he slid into a seat next to a good looking witch. "How about we go back to your place for a little fun?"

"And just why would I wanna do that?" She asked with a lazy smile.

"Well . . ." Harry smiled and began licking his eyebrows.

"Check please," the woman screamed. She took him back to her house, the things he did to her, the things she did in return.



She was kneeling before him when the door opened to admit a very confused little boy. Eyes widening in shock, Harry recognised the little boy and he knew what he had to do.

"Pow," he said loudly. "Right in the kisser."

The present.

"And that's why I hate Potters," Snape said firmly. "The second I saw him, I knew that James Potter was related to him. I knew I had to protect the world from him and his dark urges."

"So you joined a Dark Lord?"

"Seemed like a good idea at the time. Besides, he wasn't on the same side as those damned Potters." Snape was quick to point out.

"You're going to have to learn to let go of your anger," the therapist said calmly. "And admit to yourself that Harry Potter couldn't have anything to do with that mysterious man you saw."

AN: Yes, I stole this joke from The Family Guy.

Disclaimer: Never get between a house elf nanny and her charge.

Dobby the Great

"Well?" The Director of Magical Law Enforcement demanded. "What do we know about the Granger case?"

"Nothing," Amelia said firmly. "We do suspect quite a bit though."

"Let's have it."

"We think the father was . . . is an Unspeakable named Martin McCoy who worked in the potions research department, colleagues say that he was a brilliant researcher that had an odd obsession with teeth. He covered his tracks fairly well but he did leave us a hint as to his true identity."

"What was it?"

"His name," Amelia said with a smile. "Granger, Martin was related to a potions master with the same name."

"And the mother?"

"Maggy Moody," Amelia replied. "Mad Eye's niece. The two of them disappeared a few months earlier then the girl, Hermione was born."

"Good work Amelia." She turned to the other Auror. "Did we get anything useful out of the house elves?"

"I think so," the man said slowly. "Near as I can tell. The Grangers sent their house elf to get help from the Potter house elf . . ."

"Why?"

"They seem to think that there is a betrothal contract in place," the Auror replied. "The Granger house elf was quite firm that Harry Potter sir get his Hermey?"

"I see," the Director laughed. "Do we have any way of confirming this?"

"James Potter and Martin McCoy were good friends," Amelia said. "And Maggy got along quite well with Lily."

"And the Potter house elf agrees," the other Auror added. "As I was saying, the Granger house elf got the Potter house elf who went to the Lovegoods for help. While this happened, the Granger house elf went to get Harry Potter . . . presumably so that he could comfort his betrothed."

"Go on."

"The Potter house elf arrived at the Lovegood home to find that Angelina Lovegood was badly injured. It then saved her life at the urging of Luna Lovegood . . . that's Angelina's daughter."

"We know what happens after that," the Director said with a nod.

"Uh . . . one more thing."

"What is it?"

"The Potter house elf has decided that Luna Lovegood is betrothed to Harry Potter . . . presumably to repay the life debt it received by saving her mother's life."

"Has anyone thought to explain to the elf that the boy can only marry one girl?"

"The elves insist that Harry Potter sir must have both his 'Hermy' and his 'Loveygood.' They've threatened some fairly dire things to anyone that tries to prevent the marriage."

"What?"

"The . . . uh . . . Granger house elf added that harming wizards was perfectly legal so long as it was in defence of its master," the Auror added quickly. "Both house elves agree that taking Harry Potter sir's betrothed away or trying to prevent the three way marriage is harmful."

"Just what I needed," the Director sighed. "Another mess."

"Yes sir," he agreed. "We've got an expert on house elves outside waiting to meet with you should you wish it."

"Fine, let's see this expert then."

The Auror opened the door and motioned towards a person outside.

"Thank you for meeting with me Director," a woman that was presumably the expert said.

"What's your take on this?"

"First of all, I wouldn't do anything to separate the house elves and the children."

"Why?"

"There was a case about seventy five years ago," the expert replied. "A group of Dark Wizards broke into a home and killed a young couple. After that they went to the nursery to finish wiping out the line and found a house elf sitting with the child. When it became clear that they intended to harm the child, the house elf screamed 'you must not hurt baby Jenny' before dispatching ten fully trained wizards."

"What?"

"One house elf killed ten wizards," the expert repeated herself. "Killed them before they could get off a single spell. After that she cleaned up the bodies and put them out with the other trash. Director, if you do anything that the house elves see as a threat to the children then there is a good chance that it will be the last thing you ever do."

"Why doesn't this happen more often?" Amelia asked. "I know that there were house elves at some of the houses attacked by 'you-know-who' so why didn't they do something?"

"They might not have liked their owners," the expert said with a shrug. "Who knows. You have to remember that house elves are flighty creatures. Most of them would also be considered to insane to be allowed in public if they were human."

"So what you're saying is that we have two insane and fanatically loyal house elves on our hands?"

"Yes Director."

"Hmmm, maybe retirement isn't such a bad idea after all. How's you like this job Amelia? Good pay, underlings, free food . . ."

"I'd love it sir."

"Great then . . ."

"After you clean up this mess."

"Damn it."

IIIIIIIIII

"Let's play house," Hermione suggested to the other two children. "I'll be the mummy, Harry can be the daddy, and Luna . . ."

"Can be mummy number two," Sneezy said firmly.

"You can't have two mummies," Hermione replied.

"Dobby thinks that Harry Potter should have his Hermie and his Lovygood," Dobby replied.

"Ok . . ."

IIIIIIIIII

"So that's it then?" Hermione's father asked. "That's who I really am?"

"A brilliant wizard that did everything he could to protect his daughter," the Healer said firmly. "One so brilliant that he managed to acquire the necessary skills and credentials to survive and thrive in the muggle world. Do you think many wizards could have done what you did?"

"Wasn't that hard," he replied. "A bit of study . . ."

"Wasn't that hard?" The Healer asked in shock. "You are a muggle tooth healer, a noble and difficult profession. One you virtually created in the magical world."

"Really?"

"Nine out of ten spells and potions dealing with the treatment and healing of teeth were invented by you," the Healer agreed. "Come on man, think for a minute."

AN: Not sure if I'll write more of this, it's a fun idea but I'm loosing intrest. Tell me if you want it.

Omake: Winky

"Winky can be Harry Potter sir's house elf too," Dobby suggested.

"Winky really can?" The elf asked hopefully.

"Uh huh," Harry agreed. "You really can."

"Horay for the great Harry Potter sir," the little elf sobbed. It took a few hours to calm her down and after they did, she spent a few more in a whispered conversation with Dobby and Sneezy. "Winky wants to find a wife for the great Harry Potter sir too," the little elf said loudly.

Omake: Dudley

"I want an evil monkey butler too," Dudley screamed. "How come the freak gets one and I don't."

"Uh . . ." Vernon and Petunia shared a helpless look.

Omake: To Prevent Genocide

It was the middle of the first week and everyone had gathered in the Great Hall for their afternoon meal. When suddenly, Draco let out a heart rendering scream.

"Draco, what's wrong?" Pansy asked. "Are you alright?"

"Pansy?" He croaked, "you're alive."

"Of course I am Draco."

"What about Granger and Weasley?" Draco demanded. "Lovegood, Longbottom, the others?"

"They're all fine too," Pansy said oddly. "Unfortunately."

"Thank god," Draco said in relief.

"What's going on Draco?"

"Things were desperate," Draco said in a hollow voice. "We were being hunted like animals. Magic . . . magic was dieing and it was all our fault."

"What happened?" Daphne demanded. She wasn't sure she believed the idiot, but it couldn't hurt to keep up appearance.

"The Dark Lord returned and fulfilled his every promise," Draco said with a nostalgic smile. "We had them on the run, every day more and more of them fell."

"And he turned on us?" Tracy guessed.

"No . . . no, we made a terrible mistake." Draco said with a shiver. "We cornered what was left of the Order in an old house and gave them five seconds to surrender . . . they refused."

"So?"

"So we set the place on fire," Draco continued. "The Dark Lord even cast a charm that would keep the flames cool and the air good so as to draw things out. They screamed for hours before they finally succumbed to their wounds."

"Sounds glorious."

"It was," Draco agreed. "We found Granger and the Weasel in the basement, they'd been killed when the house collapsed and their faces were twisted into expressions of horror. It was a miracle that

they were still recognizable and the Dark Lord saw his chance to break the sole survivor."

"What happened?"

"He took their heads and sent them to Potter," Draco said with a smile. "We weren't sure why he wasn't with the others, but it didn't matter. We figured that it would only increase the fun and we laughed when we pictured him reading our note that questioned his courage for abandoning his friends to die."

"Potter didn't break?"

"He did," Draco said with a look of fear. "He dropped the veneer of civilization that he had shown the world and we learned what he was truly capable of. Women, children, the elderly, even neutrals were all hunted. Potter didn't seem to care, it was like everything he cared about was gone leaving nothing he wished to save."

"Surely one man . . ."

"He was no man," Draco snapped. "He was a demon, a Dark Lord above all others. He . . . he used to take his victims to the burnt patch of ground where his friends died when he tired of them. There he would impale them." Draco paused to take a calming breath. "There he would impale them to keep their comrades company. We put up charms to prolong the suffering of his friends and he returned the favor one hundred fold. They'd be there for months, years in some cases before they were allowed to die."

"This can't be true."

"If only it weren't," Draco said wistfully. "In the end, there were four of us left. We knew it was only a matter of time before Potter came for us and we had originally planned to beat him to the punch. To kill ourselves to deny him the satisfaction of doing it himself, but plans change."

"You came back."



"It was pure luck we found the spell," Draco said. "The lives and magic of the others providing just enough power to send me back. We . . . we drew lots to see who would do it and I came up short."

AN: Draco came from a future where Harry stopped playing nice. Draco is evil but came back not to prevent a greater evil, but to prevent the death of his entire way of life and everyone he ever knew. I see this Draco doing his best to avoid provoking Harry and his friends, doing the his damndest to protect his hated foes (minus Harry, if he dies then everything is good), and wetting himself is Harry looks at him wrong.

Omake: Advantages

"You've both been dating me?" Harry demanded. "How could you do this to me?"

"We wanted to tell you," Padma said quickly. "But we were afraid of how you'd react."

"We both like you," Parvati agreed. "We're sorry . . . perhaps we could show you the advantages of dating twin sisters?"

"What advantages?" Harry growled. "Every time one of you gets tired, you switch off. I can't keep up."

"Well," Padma said with a sultry grin.

"Why don't we show you?"

Harry thought up his response after six sticky hours and mustered the energy after another four. "Oh . . . forget about that whole being angry thing, you're the best girlfriends a guy could ask for."

AN: Goes with Working in Shifts

Disclaimer: Mon France c'est la merde. So I'm not even gonna attempt it. Been more then ten years since I had anything to do with it.

### Consequence of the Triwizard

"Gabrielle," Fleur said happily as she tried to take her sister from Harry. "Oh thank you for . . ." Fleur trailed off when it became apparent that the little girl wouldn't let go of Harry's robes. What followed was a conversation in rapid French that ended when Fleur threw up her hands and walked off with an annoyed expression on her face.

"Um . . . did anyone get any of that?" Harry asked. The French students regarded him with looks of amusement and Hermione walked up with a frown.

"Let me try Harry," she suggested. "Mum insisted I learn some when I was younger." Hermione said something to the little girl who replied quickly.

"Well?"

"Um . . . I'm not sure I got that," Hermione said slowly. "I couldn't have understood that right. Let me try again."

"Did you get it this time?" Harry asked.

"That can't be right," Hermione muttered to herself. The little girl said something in French with a smug expression on her face. "Um . . . I don't know how to tell you this Harry, but . . . uh . . . congratulations."

"What do you mean congratulations?"

"There is a very old and normally unused magical custom," Hermione said slowly. "It states roughly that a daughter of nobility shall grant her hand in marriage to anyone that rescues her. Kinda like those old nursery rhymes about knights and damsels."

"So you have to marry Krum then?"

"My parents are dentists," Hermione said quickly. "Gabrielle's parents are . . . um . . . how do I break this to you?"

"Nobility?" Harry asked weakly.

"Sorry Harry."

Gabrielle released Harry and walked up to Hermione. The other girl blushed as the young quarter Veela patted her on the bum and made a close inspection of the rest of the body.

"What's she doing?" Harry asked with growing dread.

"Uh . . . she just asked me to bend down to eye level," Hermione replied.

Gabrielle grabbed Hermione by the back of the head with her left hand and peeled Hermione's lips back with her right.

"I feel like I'm a Horse," Hermione muttered in disgust.

Giving a nod of satisfaction, Gabrielle said something in French then walked back to Harry and went back to her impersonation of a limpet.

"Thanks . . . I guess," Hermione replied.

"What'd she say?"

"She says that I have nice teeth," Hermione said absently.

Gabrielle rattled off another long string of French words with a satisfied smile on her face.

"And that I'll make a fine mistress for you," Hermione said with a shell shocked expression on her face. "Since you're much too vagarious for one girl."

"What?"

"She said that you're too manly for one girl," Hermione repeated. "Even a quarter Veela."

"Oh . . . any way out of this?"

"I'll be in the library," Hermione said.

"How do I always find myself in these sorts of situations?" Harry lamented. "What did I do to deserve this."

"Mr. Potter?"

"Yes Professor McGonagall?"

"Why don't you take her out to get some ice cream while we decide what to do about this situation?" The Professor asked gently.

"But . . ."

"Here's a pass to leave school grounds for the day," she said firmly. "Don't worry Mr. Potter, I assure you that we will get to the bottom of all this before you return."

"Yes Professor."

|||||

Hermione was sitting in the library surrounded by a stack of books on pureblood custom, trying desperately to find a way to save Harry from the latest crazy situation he'd found himself in.

"Honestly," she sighed to herself. "What's wrong with him? Why can't he just stay out of trouble?"

"You weel not find anything tu elp your arrie," Fleur said gently. "Gabrielle eez too set on 'im tu let 'im slip out of 'er fingers."

"There's got to be something I can do," Hermione waled.

"Accept 'er offer," Fleur said with a shrug. "Or who knows who my sisteer will find to replace you."

|||||

Harry ordered a banana split and sat down to enjoy the rare treat when the odd little girl said something in delight and stole the cherry from the top.

"I was gonna eat that," he muttered unhappily. Gabrielle seemed to be ignoring him as she looked off into space for a few seconds. Then without warning, she pulled the stem out of her mouth and presented it to him with a look of pride.

"Well . . . I guess tyeing the stem into a knot with your tongue is a neat trick, "but couldn't you get your own cherry next time?"

Gabrielle blinked at him, then launched into a long stream of French that ended when the young girl began to giggle.

"Right . . . I guess."

AN: You'll see some of the things here got recycled into LLaLL, this got written first and they were too good to sit in a half finished idea on my HD.

Gabrielle has decided that Harry is her future husband. She wants Hermione to be one of his mistresses (That's what she suggested when Hermione walked up to them) since he seems to like her and because it is apparent that Harry is too much for one woman. Gabrielle then demands that Hermione (and any future mistresses) turn Harry into a skilled lover. Her first time is NOT going to consist of inexperienced fumbling. Everyone that speaks French is rather appalled by how crude the little girl is and no one bothers to clue in a confused Harry.

Disclaimer: Bit darker then I usually write.

Debts Must be Paid

"You know, I found something interesting about you."

The voice woke Hermione from a sound sleep and her hand shot towards her wand. "Who's there?" She demanded.

"It's me," the voice said. "Your friend Harry . . . and I found something interesting about you."

"What is it?" She asked nervously, she couldn't find her wand and she was acutely aware that she was helpless. This wouldn't normally be a problem, normally she'd be the first to tell you that Harry was harmless . . . that she'd be safe with him. But something about his manner was . . . odd.

"I learned that you've been telling Dumbledore about me," Harry said calmly. "That you've betrayed me."

"But he's Dumbledore," Hermione protested weakly. "He just wants what's best for you."

"Now now Hermione," Harry mocked. "You know better than that, care to try again?"

"He said it was for the greater good," Hermione sobbed. "He said it would all be for the best."

"You really think that it's ok to ruin someone's life because of the greater good?" Harry asked calmly, much too calmly. "To make choices for them, to enslave them, to make them your tool for the greater good."

"I'm sorry Harry," Hermione wailed. "So sorry."

"That may be, but you have yet to answer the question."

"He said it was for the best."

"Should I take that as a yes then?"

"Yes," Hermione whispered. She hated herself for what she'd done, hated herself for lacking the courage to admit the nature of her crime in the months before the confrontation, and hated herself even more for ruining her friendship with 'the-boy-who-lived.'

"Wonderful," Harry said with a smile. "I knew I could count on you of all people to look at things clinically. If your goal is the greater good then your means do not matter, they justify the ends do they not?"

"I'm sorry," she chanted. Her face was in her hands so she could avoid looking at those betrayed green eyes. "Sorry sorry sorry."

"Don't be sorry," Harry said gently. "You provided me with the push I needed to do what was necessary."

"What are you going to do?" Hermione asked fearfully.

"I'm going to serve the greater good," Harry said vaguely. "Do you remember our first year? When Ron and I saved you from the troll?"

"Yes," Hermione agreed. She felt sick for betraying the boy who had saved her life. "I do."

"Excellent, then tell me; do you think you would have survived if we had not intervened?"

"No." Hermione drooped even more. "I don't."

"Then you won't contest the fact that you owe me a life debt," Harry said grandly.

"You and Ron," Hermione said. The girl was miserable, flinching at every word that came out of her former friend's mouth.

"Surprised you don't know this one," Harry's voice took on a lecturing tone. "As you were saved as a result of my actions and as Ron was there at my suggestion, your life debt belongs to me and me alone. Do you understand?"

"Yes, I understand."

"Good, very good. Can you tell me what I can demand of you because of the debt you owe me?"

"Anything," Hermione said. "Any one act, even if it would result in my death." The girl's voice calmed, she had begun to accept her fate.

"Correct," Harry said proudly, as if he were a teacher shining praise on a particularly bright student. "But don't worry, I don't plan to ask for anything that would harm you."

"You don't?" She asked with growing hope.

"Of course not," Harry said quickly. "You are my friend after all, even if you did treat that friendship . . . well, we've already gone over that."

"Yes Harry," she said in a subdued tone.

"All I require is that you assist me in a ritual," Harry explained. "One that will not result in your death or in any physical harm. Do you understand?"

"Yes."

"Good," Harry said firmly. "Read this, tell me when you've mastered your part."

Hermione spent several minutes reading over the paper before recoiling in horror. "Harry . . . but this . . ."

"Will make you my slave yes," Harry agreed coldly. "Don't worry, it's for the greater good after all."

"But . . ."

"Shoe's a bit different when it's on the other foot?" He gave a cold cruel laugh. "You should have thought of that before, now read."

AN: Don't generally write this sort of stuff but the idea popped into my head. I prefer humor but sometimes other things want to be written. Basic idea is that every Dark Dumbledore (or Double D as I like to call him) cliché is true. Harry's friends are spying on him, Dumbledore put him with the Dursleys to break him, etc. Harry finds out and with the help of a few life debts and a little dark magic, strikes off on his own . . . in the name of the greater good of course. After all, what good could be greater than the one that benefits him. Thought I'd



mention that it could be argued that his defeating of Voldemort puts every wizard, witch, and magical creature in the UK in his debt.

Disclaimer: Despite the misleading title, I'm afraid this isn't a cross.

Bed Knobs and . . .

The Wizengamot was in session when Dumbledore opened the floor to receive questions per tradition before adjuring. Several people gaped in shock when Rolanda Hooch broke tradition by standing and demanding the right to be heard. At the time it was seen by many as a great miscalculation, that position was changed several years later when all the circumstances became known.

"What do you wish to bring to our attention Rolanda?" Dumbledore asked with a kindly smile.

"Harry Potter," she said in a steady voice. "Is my first cousin and I am named as one of several possible guardians in his parents will. I would like him to be placed into my custody.

"Rolanda be reasonable," Dumbledore pleaded. "The boy is safe where he is, there is no need to remove him from a stable home."

"The boy has a name," the woman said calmly. "And that name is Harry Potter, as his closest remaining relative it is my duty to take him in and raise him to be a productive member of our world."

"I'm afraid that isn't possible," Dumbledore said in a kindly voice. "He's with his relatives who . . ."

"Muggles?" Lucius Malfoy roared on cue. "How dare you deny a wizard his birthright by placing him with such people." It hadn't taken much to buy his support, the chance to inconvenience Dumbledore and the promise of a few private lessons for his son had bought Rolanda Hooch a temporary ally. The thought that he could gain young Harry's backing had ensured he stayed bought . . . for the time being anyway. "I won't stand for it."

"The boy is . . ."

"He has a name," Rolanda interrupted. "See that you use it."

"Yes well . . ." Dumbledore stammered, a bit shocked to be treated in such a way by one of his staff members. "Harry is safe and happy where he is."

"So you say," Rolanda said calmly. "But what proof do you have to offer?"

"Proof?"

"You can't expect us to just take your word when we're dealing with something as important as the welfare of a child can you?" Rolanda purred. "Surely you won't object to an inspection of young Harry's environment."

"I'm afraid I can't allow that to happen," Dumbledore said with a frown. "If his location were known by . . ."

"House Number Four," Lucius said smoothly. He was still working on the rest of the address but the information he had was good enough for the bluff. "I'd rather not say anything else in an open session. While somewhat restricted, it isn't nearly as secure as you pretend it is."

"Very well," Dumbledore sighed. "Who would you like to conduct this investigation?"

"Director of Magical Law Enforcement Amelia Bones, Chef Healer Arlinda Grace, and myself at a minimum."

"Agreed," Dumbledore said reluctantly. "With the understanding that if the child is not in any danger then you will leave him where he is for the time being."

"For the time being," Rolanda agreed.

"And so long as I may accompany you."

"Fine."

"I trust that you are willing to accompany us Director Bones?" Dumbledore sighed.

"I am," the woman agreed. "What about it Grace?"

"Wouldn't miss it Amelia."

"Gather round," Dumbledore commanded. "Everyone touch the quill."

The portkey deposited the small group behind the Dursley family's house.

"We won't be observed by muggles here?" Amelia asked dryly.

"The wards are still good," Dumbledore said gruffly. "Come along and try not to disturb Harry's family too much, they're aware of magic but I'll trust you not to terrorise them."

"That all depends on them," Rolanda said with a feral grin.

Dumbledore ignored her response and walked up to knock on the front door. "Hello Petunia," he said to the horse faced woman who answered. "Is Harry in?"

"He's gone," the woman said fearfully.

"I see . . . and when will he return?"

"I don't know." She tried to shut the door but Amelia stepped forward and blocked it. "What are you doing?"

"We'll wait for him here," Amelia said sweetly. She'd long since traded in her boots for a desk job, but she still possessed the skills and instincts that had kept her alive. And those same instincts were screaming that something was wrong in this house. "Ok with you?" Without waiting for an answer she brushed past the woman and entered the house. "Grace?"

"Yeah Amelia?"

"Remember that spell you used to use when we were searching a house?"

"Got it," the healer said calmly. "Alio Locus."

"Well?"

"I have a heartbeat under the stairs," Healer Grace said calmly.

"Guess those years of getting fat behind a desk haven't slowed you down much huh?"

"Once a Field Healer and all that," Grace said with a grin.

"Cover me." Amelia drew her wand and carefully approached the staircase and an observant individual would notice that Grace was keeping close watch on the Headmaster.

"GRACE," Amelia screamed. "Get over here now."

"What do you have?" The Healer replied as she rushed over.

"I have a young male of about three years of age with a broken arm and numerous bruises," Amelia replied. "Damn . . . make that five years old, it's Harry Potter."

"I thought you said he'd be safe here Headmaster," Rolanda accused.

"I never thought they'd treat a child like this," Dumbledore gasped. "If I had known."

"Did you ever bother to check," Hooch demanded. "You've been telling me he was safe for the past four years and you never bothered to check?"

"I . . . I thought."

"It's clear that this is not a safe environment," Rolanda said calmly. "As such I am taking him away from here and he will not be returning. Do you understand?"

"Of course," the old man agreed quickly. "This is no place for him . . . I've . . . I've made a terrible mistake."

"Several."

"But . . . this really is the safest place for him," Dumbledore mused. "Perhaps we could . . ."

"I don't believe we could Headmaster," she said sharply.

"No . . . no I suppose not," Dumbledore agreed quickly. "But do you really think you're the best person to take young Harry?"

"Why do you ask that?"

"Well . . . you've never had children of your own," Dumbledore pointed out. "And while you're a more than capable instructor, that doesn't necessarily mean you'll be a good parent. Not to mention your career," he added in a silky voice. "Do you really think you'd have the time to raise young Harry properly while serving as chief flying instructor?"

"What do you suggest?"

"Perhaps we could place him with the Weasley family," Dumbledore said with a smile. "Molly already has several children and . . ."

"And they are not mentioned in the will," Rolanda said firmly. "I am."

"I see, what about your career? I'm not sure I could retain a professor with such pressing responsibilities to distract her."

"I wouldn't worry too much about that," Rolanda said calmly. "Amelia, how's he doing?"

"Still hasn't woken up," the Auror replied. "I've got help on the way, two dozen of my best and two more Field Healers."

"Good."

"How are you going to support Harry if you aren't employed?" Dumbledore pressed. "I'm fairly sure that the Ministry wouldn't want young Harry to want for anything."

"As I said," Rolanda said coldly. "That is none of your concern."

The conversation paused as the two of them watched several Aurors tramp into the room to take the horse faced woman into custody.

"As head of the Wizengamot and Headmaster of the school Harry is going to attend, I feel a certain responsibility for his welfare."

"You have an odd way of showing it," Rolanda said harshly. "Harry is no longer any of your concern and I will thank you to but out of our affairs in the future. Good day Headmaster."

"I . . ."

"Get out of my crime scene Dumbledore," Amelia reentered the conversation. "And keep yourself available, I have several questions for you regarding what we found today."

"I . . . of course," the Headmaster sighed. "I shall be at Hogwarts for the foreseeable future if you have need of me."

The two women watched Dumbledore leave and Amelia turned to Madame Hooch. "So what now?"

"Now?" She seemed amused. "I take that job the Harpies offered, the pay is much better then I got at Hogwarts even if it doesn't have all the benefits."

"Benefits?"

"Nuturing young flyers," she explained. "Pity."

"Isn't it?"

The years passed and in what seemed like no time (since I presume you've just finished reading the preceding paragraph) Harry was at Hogwarts and ready to take his 'first' flying lesson.

"Good afternoon class," Instructor Smith said in a low baratone. "We are fortunate to have several professional Quidditch players here to observe our lesson."

"Observe Harry Potter more like," one of the players said to another.  
"Can't fathom why the Ice Bitch is here though."

"Because that's the coach's son," the 'Ice Bitch' replied.

"Fat lot of good it'll do you," the man barked. "He doesn't have the right equipment to play for your team. The Harpies don't take men."

"You're forgetting two things gentlemen,"

"What two things?"

"The first is that there is an exception to every rule," she said calmly.  
"The second is that I've seen him fly."

"He's that good?"

"Better."

"Damn."

"So what do you think?" She continued. "Would Harry rather play on his mum's team? A team he grew up around who always treated him like their collective little brother? Or would he rather play for some of you?"

"Look at me Mary," Harry called out.

"Good job Harry," the 'Ice Bitch' called back. "You'll be a shoe in for the league."

AN: Had the idea pop into my head, what would happen if Harry was taken by one of the lesser used Professors and started running through what we knew about them. None of them fit until I thought of Hooch and the thought of scouts for Professional Quidditch teams at the first year flying lesson was too fun to pass up. So what about this Harry? He was practically raised by the Holly Head Harpies and his natural skill at flying has been nurtured for years. He could have a fairly cordial relationship with Draco Malfoy or they could be strangers, who knows really. Apologies for the people who thought this might be a cross with 'Bed Knobs and Broomsticks.'



Disclaimer: Yet another Harem fic.

For the Want of a Nail

It's amazing how one tiny change can turn the world from one thing to another . . .

"That's why she hasn't got any friends," Ron said cruelly.

"Conjunctiva," Hermione hit Ron with the hex before bursting into tears and running off.

And so the world changed . . .

"Stupid bint?" Ron growled as Harry led him to the hospital wing, his eyes were swollen shut. "I can't bloody see."

"We're almost there," Harry tried to calm his friend. "Here we are."

"What's happened?" The school nurse demanded.

"Know it all Granger hit me with a curse," Ron whined. "For no reason."

"I see . . . well come in here Mr. Weasley. I'm afraid you'll have to spend the night just to be sure it doesn't flair up again after I've managed to fix it."

"But what about meals?" Ron demanded.

"I'll have something brought up," Madame Pomfrey replied. "Run along now Mr. Potter."

"Yes Madame Pomfrey," Harry agreed. On his way down, he overheard a couple of the girls talking about how Hermione had retreated to one of the bathrooms and was crying her eyes out. "She deserved it," he tried to convince himself. Unbidden, memories of his time with the Dursley family began to surface.

"Maybe . . . maybe I'll apologize to her later," Harry muttered to himself. "And I suppose I could get Ron to apologize too."

His train of thought broke when their incompetent Defence Professor burst through the doors and informed everyone about a loose troll in the castle before falling to the ground in a faint.

Hermione doesn't know, Harry thought sickly. He didn't like the girl, but he'd never forgive himself if something happened to her. Ignoring the calls for students to go back to their houses, Harry dashed off in search of her, praying that he'd find her before the troll did.

Harry raced through the halls and arrived just in time to see the troll raising its club to extinguish the young girl's life.

"Lumos." Harry blinded the creature with a well placed light charm. Resisting the urge to smile when the troll began thrashing around, he searched his memory for another spell to use from his meager arsenal. "Win . . ." Harry was knocked to the ground when the troll got a lucky hit on his ribs.

"Harry," Hermione screamed.

"Parvulus Levitus," Harry wheezed the static shock charm. The troll jerked back and slammed its head into the wall, knocking itself out. "Are you ok Hermione?"

"I think so."

"Good," Harry sighed. He could feel himself blacking out. "Cause I'm not."

The Professors arrived a few minutes later to find the sleeping troll and a crying Hermione holding Harry's head in her lap, begging him to wake up.

"Get him to the hospital wing," Dumbledore shouted. "Now."

"It's gonna be alright Harry," Minerva said gently as she rushed the boy to the hospital wing. "You're safe now and going to be ok."

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"Look at this," Professor Flitwick said with a look of astonishment.  
"Look at the spells he used."

"Interesting," Dumbledore mused.

"I want an apprenticeship," Flitwick said immediately.

"What?"

"The English team would kill to have him with them at the next Olympics after they hear about this," Flitwick said with a smile.

"Using his fame to . . ."

"Look at what he did Albus," Flitwick commanded. "Look at it. He defeated a troll with two bloody spells, two spells so basic that they can be done by a first year with no exposure to magic. He blinded it with a light charm and used a hex most students use to shock each other in their Common Rooms to finish it off. Think of his potential Albus."

"I just want him to have a normal childhood," Albus said weakly.

"The chances of that happening died with his parents," Flitwick sighed. "To ignore that would be to do him a great disservice."

"What do you suggest then?"

"I suggest that we give him the tools to deal with what he's almost certainly going to be facing in the future," Flitwick said seriously. "We both know that he's going to have a difficult future, it's the curse of the duelist."

"And the reason both of us choose to spend all our time at Hogwarts," Dumbledore sighed. "I had hoped to spare him . . ."

"And all you'd be doing is murdering a small boy by failing to prepare him for what the future will hold," Flitwick said gently. "He already has the reputation . . . more than I ever did and he's just a bloody first year."

"I had hoped . . ."

"That the world had suddenly shifted to become a different place?" Flitwick sighed. "Then perhaps you should rejoin the world to confirm that before you choose to send Harry out without preparing him."

"You're right Filius," Dumbledore said, looking older and more worn out than he had in years.

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Hermione waited in the background until the Healer had finished working on Harry before detaching herself from the wall and walking to the side of his bed. Hermione sat by Harry's bedside and took the boy's hand into her own.

"You shouldn't have rescued me Harry," she said in a subdued voice. "You're important to the wizarding world and I'm just a know it all without any friends. I promise Harry, I promise that I'll always be by your side and I'll always help you. It was all my fault."

Across the isle, as Ron watched through half closed eyes as know it all Granger poured her heart out to his injured friend he couldn't help but feel guilty about his actions earlier that day.

"It wasn't supposed to be like this," he whispered to himself. "I just . . . it wasn't supposed to be like this."

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"And that's everything that happened Professor," Lavender finished.

"I see," Minerva said. "Thank you girls, you've both been a good help." She looked around until she spotted one of her prefects. "Percy," she called out.

"Yes Professor?"

"I'd like to have a word with you."

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"Visiting hours are over Ms. Granger," Madame Pomfrey said gently. "I'm afraid you're going to have to go back to your dorm now."

Hermione ignored the Healer and refused to move from Harry's side.

"Ms. Granger . . . Hermione, are you listening to me?"

"Just wake up Harry," Hermione begged. "Please, just wake up."

"I suppose . . . I suppose it couldn't hurt to let you stay here for the night," Poppy said more to herself than to the young girl. "Carry on Ms. Granger."

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"Has Ms. Granger told you what happened Minerva?" Dumbledore asked.

"No, she's still won't talk to anyone but Mr. Potter," the old woman replied.

"And Harry hasn't woken up yet," Dumbledore sighed.

"I did however have a little chat with some of the other students."

"Well?"

"It appears that Mr. Weasley said some rather cruel things about Ms. Granger and she overheard them."

"Explains why she hexed him," Dumbledore mused.

"And why she was alone in the bathroom," Minerva added. "I believe that Mr. Potter either went to apologize or rescue her when he was injured."

"I trust Mr. Weasley has been punished for this?"

"For what?" Minerva asked. "For picking on another student?"

"We nearly lost two students because of him," Dumbledore said sharply.

"He couldn't have known what would happen," Minerva replied mildly. "Officially, there is nothing I can do about this without appearing to show favoritism to Ms. Granger or Mr. Potter."

"Unofficially?" Dumbledore asked with a small smile.

"Unofficially?" Minerva asked. "I am confident that the situation will resolve itself."

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Percy stalked through the Common Room until he found Fred and George doing . . . something in a corner.

"Fred, George." He said sharply. "I need you two to come with me."

"We haven't even done anything yet Percy," Fred said with a smirk.

"Nothing you can prove anyway," George agreed.

Percy made an exaggerated show of plucking the Prefect's badge off his robes and dropping it on the floor. "This has nothing to do with the school," Percy said simply. "It's a family matter."

Fred and George shared an unreadable look before their house crests jointed Percy's badge on the floor. "Well?"

"Let's find some place more private to deal with this," Percy suggested.

"Lead the way Percy."

Without a word, Percy took the twins to an abandoned classroom and carefully cast several privacy charms. "It's about . . ."

"Wait," Fred ordered.

"We know a few that you don't," George finished. The twins finished their own privacy charms before turning to Percy with a look of expectation.

"It's about Ron," Percy began. "And I think we need to deal with it before mum finds out for his sake. We'll tell dad what happened and that the situation has been taken care of and he'll back us up."

"So what's the deal Percy?"

"Professor McGonagall came to me with a rather interesting story," Percy began. "The two of you play your pranks but you've never been deliberately cruel." Percy sighed.

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The first thing Harry saw when he cracked open his eyes was Hermione's worried face looking down at him. "You're awake," the little girl said happily. "I'll go get Madame Pomfrey."

"What happened?" Harry groaned.

"You got in a fight with a troll," Ron replied from his own bed. "She stayed with you until you woke up, didn't eat or sleep or nothing. I . . . I think we were wrong about her Harry."

"Oh."

"Mister Potter," Poppy said as she walked in. "So good to have you with us again. Do you remember what happened?"

"Bits of it," Harry replied.

"That's normal," the Healer assured the boy. "Let me see . . . it seems like you've gotten through the rough parts and you're on the mend."

"He's going to be ok then Madame Pomfrey?" Hermione screwed up her courage to ask.

"He's going to be fine," the Healer said kindly. "Why don't you take the bed next to him? You've been here a while and I'm sure you must be tired."

"Yes Madame Pomfrey," Hermione agreed.

"And be sure to drink this nutrition potion first," she said. "You're a growing girl and you can't skip meals like that."

"I will Madame Pomfrey."

Several people turned to stare at the trio as they emerged from the Hospital Wing the next day. More specifically, they turned to stare at the young girl that refused to leave her savior's side.

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In the Slytherin common room, the seventh year girls prefect smiled as a plan began to form. It wouldn't be easy, but if she succeeded then she would have all the power that she'd craved her entire life.

Drunk with the thought and giggling with excitement, she began gathering her supporters to set the groundwork of what she hoped would make her the most powerful woman in the magical United Kingdom.

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"Could you stay after class Mr. Potter," Professor Flitwick asked kindly. "I have some things I wish to discuss with you."

"Yes Professor," Harry said politely.

"See you later mate," Ron said. "Want me to walk you back to the Common Room Hermione?"

"Um . . ." Hermione was torn between amazement at the red head's change of attitude and her desire to stay by Harry's side.

"She'd probably rather go to the library," Harry said with a grin. "Right Hermione?"

"I'd . . . I'll wait outside," Hermione finally managed to say.

"I wouldn't advise that," the tiny Professor said kindly. "There are several things I need to discuss with Mr. Potter and we shall be busy for quite a while."



"I . . ." Hermione bit her lower lip. "I'll be in the library if you need me Harry," she finally ventured.

"Ok," Harry agreed with an odd look at the girl.

Professor Flitwick waited until the other two children had left the room before turning to Harry with a smile on his face. "Have you ever considered what you'd like to do after you leave Hogwarts?"

"No sir."

"Well, how does being a Professional duelist sound?"

"What do they do?"

"They're a bit like a pugilist . . . professional fighter in the muggle world," he explained. "I believe you have the potential to be on the United Kingdoms' Olympic Dueling team and I was hoping that you'd allow me to give you a few lessons to get you ready for the tryouts in a few years?"

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"You know what I want you to do?"

"Yes Morgana," the boy agreed. "You can count on me."

"I'd better be able to," Morgana said sharply. "Or your parents are going to find out about . . . well, several things you don't want them to."

"I said I can handle it," he growled.

"Be on your way then."

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"Ron," Percy said coldly when he noticed the other boy coming up the hall. "Come here."

"What is it Percy?"

"The twins and I have something to discuss with you."

"What were you thinking when you decided to pick on one of your house mates?" Fred asked.

"Easy," George replied. "He wasn't."

"I didn't want her to get hurt," Ron tried to defend himself. "I just . . . I'm trying to be nicer to her."

"We are the sons of the Weasley family," Percy said arrogantly. "We may be rampant trouble makers."

"Or arrogant prats," George laughed.

"Quite," Percy agreed. "But we are never bullies."

"I know," Ron said quickly. "Believe me I know. I made a mistake."

"Excellent," Percy said with a smile. "Now we have one thing to do before we can tell mum and dad that the situation has been handled."

"What's that?" Ron asked dumbly.

"Make amends," Fred said seriously. "And we'll give you whatever help you need."

"We're family after all," George offered.

"And family sticks together," Percy finished. "No matter what."

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Hermione was rushing down the hall towards the library when she ran into what felt like a brick wall.

"Watch where you're going," the seventh year Slytherin growled. "Filthy mud . . . Granger? I apologize for the comment, I didn't realise it was you. But the fact remains that you need to learn to look where you're going, wouldn't want you to get hurt would we?"

"Why . . . why are you being so nice to me?" Hermione stuttered, her eyes fixed firmly on her feet.

"Because you're the first muggle born in decades to follow the customs," he replied. "I'm a traditionalist not a purist."

"I don't understand," Hermione said. "What does that mean?"

"I'm not the right person to explain all the details," he said gently. "Why don't you talk to Morgana, the seventh year girls prefect for Slytherin house? She can answer all your questions."

"Thank you," Hermione said.

"Run along then," he said calmly. "Quickly but carefully, wouldn't want to keep Potter waiting would you?"

"Oh," she squeaked.

He laughed as he watched her run back up the hall, it really was nice to see a muggle born with a bit of respect for tradition. He really did need to make it a point to write to the family to tell them about her.

Hermione had been in the library for the better part of an hour when she was approached by one of the Slytherin Prefects.

"Do you have a few minutes to spare Granger?"

"Yes," Hermione agreed nervously.

"Then why don't you come with me," she suggested. The girl took Hermione down a dizzying array of halls until they arrived in what appeared to be an old teacher's lounge.

"Have a seat Granger," the older girl said kindly. "Do you mind if I call you Hermione?"

"No, it's ok."

"Then you must call me Morgana," the older girl said. "Now, I understand that you have some questions for me?"

"I've noticed that a lot of the older Slytherin students have been nice to me lately," Hermione said in an almost inaudible voice. "I wanted to know why."

"Purebloods are broken up into three main groups," she lectured. "The Purists, the Progressives, and the Traditionalists. The Purists are the most vocal group and they formed the bulk of the last Dark Lord's followers. They spout the usual nonsense about killing muggles and so fourth, quite depressing fellows. The second group are made up of people like your classmate Ron's family and like people."

"What about the third group?"

"The Traditionalists are the ones that have been polite to you lately," she continued. "They don't necessarily feel that muggle born are inferior. Consensus is that muggle born are . . . well, rude for lack of a better term."

"Rude?"

"How would you feel if someone came into your house and ignored your customs?" She asked dryly. "Not just ignored but ridiculed and made no effort to learn them?"

"Oh."

"We are being polite to you because you are respecting them," she said with a smile.

"I am?"

"You attached yourself to The Potter as his retainer did you not?"

"I promised to stay with him forever," Hermione replied.

"Exactly," she agreed. "We did notice that you have not performed several of your duties to him but after a bit of research, we decided that it was more due to ignorance then anything else. We also noted that you spend quite a bit of time in the library which has an appalling

lack of books on the subject, and that you have few if any friends to tell you."

"So you're going to teach me?"

"So I'm going to teach you," the other girl agreed. "The first thing you have to know is that you are expected to begin looking for a suitable match for Potter. While you're still children, it's not too early to start thinking about things, maybe even come to an informal understanding or two, a betrothal at most. Normally his parents would perform that task, but since they were killed . . ."

"I can't marry him myself?"

"You can," the girl said quickly. "But it is important that the first wife be of appropriate status to marry 'the-boy-who-lived.' Do you understand?"

"I think so, what do you mean by first wife?"

"Monogamy is not something that has infected the magical world," Morgana said dryly. "Suffice to say that Harry may, no should have more than one wife."

"Why should?"

"Because of his wealth, position, and the fact that he is the last of his line. Do you understand?"

"I don't want to find Harry another wife," Hermione said stubbornly. "Not that I'm going to marry Harry, but if I do then I don't want to share."

Morgana sighed. "Alright, I didn't want to go into this in detail right now but remember the three groups I mentioned earlier?"

"The Traditionalists, The Purists, and the Progressives?"

"Yes," Morgana sighed. "The Traditionalists are, if you look at their origins, afraid of muggles. They like to maintain that they are above muggles, or at the very least separate and independent of muggle

society. In short, they were started by people who are terrified by what muggles could do. The old families that trace their line to the days when muggles revolted against their wizard masters, families that know that secrecy is the way to safety."

"Oh . . . then why are they being so polite to me?"

"That's my doing," Morgana explained. "What would you like to be after you leave Hogwarts?"

"I'd like to be a researcher," Hermione answered, a bit puzzled by the change in subject.

"I'd like to be Minister of Magic," Morgana sighed. "But that's not going to happen unless there is a drastic change in society. With few exceptions, women aren't worth much in Traditionalist circles. Because our numbers are so low, most people seem to think girls should spend all their time pregnant and raising children. The other students are being nice to you because every Traditionalist child grows up with stories about loyal muggle born retainers."

"So?"

"So most Traditionalist families aren't much better than the Purists when it comes down to it," Morgana said bluntly. "Underneath anyway, they're willing to lend a bit of covert support but would never dream of doing anything that could harm their image. I used your example to discredit that faction and take control of the Traditionalists . . . well, the ones at school anyway."

"You pointed out that they couldn't be mean to a muggle born student that followed custom?"

"Exactly," Morgana said with a proud smile. "I'm in my house because of my ambition, my desire to hold power. Not because I wasn't intelligent enough for Ravenclaw."

"What about the others?"

"The Purists are . . . well, for lack of a better term. The Purists are insecure, their families aren't as ancient as they would like most to believe, no more then about five hundred years for the oldest."

"And the last?"

"The Progressives," she said with a hint of distaste. "Are at their core ignorant. They are the witches and wizards that think we're not so different from the muggles, just know a few things that they don't."

"What's wrong with that?"

"Human nature," Morgana replied. "Humans have a history of destroying that witch they do not understand."

"Oh."

"The Progressives are led by the Headmaster," Morgana said with a sigh. "Which has made things difficult for the Traditionalists and given rise to the Pureist/Traditionalists that I talked about earlier."

"How did the Headmaster do that?"

"By appointing a Death Eater to be Head of Slytherin House," Morgana growled. "Snape is a murdering coward that belongs in prison. Instead he's allowed to walk free and poison young Slytherins with . . ." She closed her eyes and gave a slow count to ten.

"He's a Death Eater?" Hermione squeaked. "Then why does Dumbledore let him stay here?"

"Snape claimed that he was a spy," Morgana explained. "Dumbledore's spy. I . . . I can't confirm it, but judging by what happens in the Slytherin common room with Snape's knowledge and approval. I can not believe that he is anything more then a petty and evil man . . . look at how he's treated Harry."

"So what's in it for you?"

"As I said before I wish to be Minister of Magic," Morgana continued. "As a woman I'm unacceptable to the Traditionalists. As a

Traditionalist, I'm unacceptable to the Progressives. And as for the Purists . . . well, there are some types of support that I can do without."

"That still doesn't explain . . ."

"I can build a new group or change the Traditionalists with Harry's backing," Morgana said quickly. "You want what's best for Harry don't you?"

"Yes but . . ."

"But so do I," Morgana interrupted. "Making him the proper Traditionalist would be good for him. You've seen his clothes haven't you? The way he reacts to physical contact, there are a thousand little things that tell me he hasn't had the best home life."

"You'll help?" Hermione asked in a small voice.

"I'll help," Morgana said firmly. "If for no other reason then because it will be in my best interest to help. Think of it this way, a harem is what's best for Harry. It'll provide him with all the love and affection that he's been without all his life."

"I . . ."

"And think of the benefits to you," Morgana continued. "You don't have many friends do you?"

"No." Hermione's shoulders dropped.

"The other girls would be your friends," Morgana said swiftly. "Why don't we set things up and let Harry decide what he wants to do? The Purists want him dead for what he did to their Lord, and the Progressives made Snape one of his teachers. I swear to you that the Traditionalists, at least the ones under my control will not do anything to harm him."

"O . . . ok."



"You've made the right decision Hermione," Morgana said with a feeling of triumph. "Wait here, I have someone I'd like you to meet."

Morgana disappeared for a few minutes and returned with another girl of about Hermione's age. "Hermione," Morgana began. "I would like to introduce you to Daphne Greengrass. She is a first year like you and she is also one of the few girls in your year that has enough status to be one of Harry's perspective wives."

"So I should try to get Harry to marry her?"

"So I hope that the two of you are friends," Morgana corrected. "If you do not get along with her then there is no point in seeing if we can develop anything else in the future."

"My opinion is important?"

"Just behind Harry's," Morgana agreed. "You are a valued retainer and it would place undue strain on Harry if you and his first wife did not get along. The choice is his of course, but it is your job to point him in the direction of girls that will not disrupt his house."

"Hello," Hermione greeted the other girl nervously. "I'm Hermione."

"Daphne."

"Um . . . do you have any hobbies?"

"Why don't we get one thing out of the way before we begin."

"Ok."

"You can be his wife in the muggle world, you can be the master of his house." Daphne said with an unconcerned shrug. "I don't mind. The only thing I care about is being first in the magical world."

"So you don't think it's a bit strange to share him?"

"Why would I?" Daphne asked. "It's normal for me."

"Oh . . . why do you want to marry Harry?"

"He's wealthy and powerful," Daphne replied instantly. "And he seems like a nice boy."

Morgana grinned as she watched the girls talk. It seemed that five hour of coaching the Greengrass girl on what to say had paid off. Abruptly, she turned back to the conversation.

"It's his choice of course," Daphne continued. "But I'm sure you realise that it's in his best interests to make a proper pureblood girl his senior wife."

"You can be senior but I get to run his household."

"Ok," Daphne conceded. "But I want my friend Tracy to be his wife too."

"Only if Harry agrees."

"Of course."

Morgana smiled as she watched the two girls hammer out the details, it seemed that her plans were going to work after all.

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"What did Flitwick want?" Ron asked after Harry returned to the common room.

"Wanted to teach me how to duel," Harry replied.

"Wicked," Ron enthused. "You agreed didn't you?"

"I told him I'd think about it," Harry said slowly. "I'm not sure if I want to be a professional fighter."

"Just because you know how doesn't mean you have to," Ron said quickly. "It's like Quidditch, just because you're on a house team doesn't mean you have to become a professional player . . . not that I understand why you wouldn't want to be a professional player," Ron continued. "Like my brother Charlie, he could have done it but he decided to go take care of Dragons in Romania . . . mental."

"Oh . . ." Harry said with a stunned look on his face, he hadn't thought of that.

"Yeah, so are you gonna do it?"

"I guess so mate," Harry agreed. "Yeah . . . yeah, I think I will."

"Good," Ron said firmly. "Now let's go round up Hermione and we can . . ."

"Hermione?"

"She's not so bad if you give her a chance," Ron replied. "And I sort of feel responsible after what happened . . . Weasleys just don't say the sorts of things I did."

"Ok," Harry agreed. "Let's go find her mate."

"She's been hanging out around us anyway," Ron continued as they walked down the hall.

They found Hermione in the library a few minutes later and she quickly brightened at the sight of Harry.

"Did you have a good talk with the Professor?" Hermione asked quickly.

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "He wants me to learn Dueling from him."

"Oh . . . are you going to do it?"

"I think so," Harry agreed.

"Um . . . Hermione," Ron began. "I just wanted to apologize for all the nasty things I said about you." He recited the apology that Percy had drilled into his head. "It shamed both me and my family. Um . . . you're feeling better after what happened aren't you?"

"I'm feeling better," Hermione confirmed. She took a step to the side, placing Harry between her and the other boy. "And I accept your apology."

"Thanks," Ron replied.

"Um . . . Harry."

"What is it?"

"There's someone that wants me to introduce her," Hermione said nervously. "She has a few things she wants to talk to you about."

"What's she want to talk about?"

"I . . . I'm not sure I should say," Hermione whispered. "But I will if you want me to."

"That's ok," Harry said. "When does she want to meet?"

"I think she could do it now if you want," Hermione said. "If you want."

"Ok."

Hermione led Ron and Harry to an empty classroom. "Wait here," Hermione asked. "I'll be right back." Rushing down the hall, she entered the unused room Morgana used as her office and past the other students.

"Harry wants to meet?" Morgana asked.

"Harry and Ron are waiting in the classroom," Hermione agreed.

"Let's go then," Morgana said. She got up and turned to one of her minions. "Have Daphne and Tracy waiting outside the door."

"Got it," the minion agreed.

Morgana followed the young girl up the hall and into the classroom where Harry was waiting.

"Harry," Hermione began. "This is Morgana, she's . . . she's . . ."

"Someone that thinks the two of us can help each other," Morgana stepped in.

"How can we help each other?" Harry asked.

"Don't say that," Morgana advised. "Rather, say what's in it for me?"

"What do you mean?"

"What do you want?" Morgana asked. "That's all negotiations are you know, finding out what they want and what you can offer. So tell me, what do you want? There must be something."

"I . . . I don't want to go back to my relatives' house this summer," Harry admitted. "Or ever again."

"I may be able to help with this," Morgana said slowly. "Assuming they don't change the rules on us, I think I can help you. In return I'd like you to consider making informal arrangements to marry with Hermione and two other girls at the present and possibly more in the future."

"Marriage?" Harry choked.

"Not for several years," Morgana said quickly. "And not if you decide you can't get along with them. You don't have to decide anything right now . . . think . . . think of it like this, they'll be your friends. Friends that might some day be your wives, but friends. You want friends don't you?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed.

"Do you have anything against girls?" Morgana persisted. "Think they're icky or anything?"

"No," Harry said.

"Then what's the problem?" Morgana asked reasonably. "You get three new friends and we can let the future take care of itself."

"Uh . . ."

"Why don't I ask the other girls to come in?" Morgana suggested. She got up and walked to the door and returned with Daphne and Tracy who blushed and giggled when they saw Harry.

"Don't listen to her Harry," Ron advised. "They're Slytherins, you can't trust them."

"Why don't you get to know Daphne and Tracy while I talk to your friend Ron?" Morgana asked evenly.

"I'm not going anywhere with you," Ron said stubbornly.

"We don't have to go anywhere," Morgana said. "How about we just have our conversation here then?"

"Fine," Ron said unhappily.

"I was wondering something Weasley," Morgana began. "What's your problem with me and the other girls?"

"I just don't like Slytherins," Ron said stubbornly.

"That's a good attitude, Slytherins tend to be slimy gits. You are overlooking something though," Morgana cooed. "It's understandable that you'd overlook it considering your age and lack of experience, nothing to be ashamed of."

"What?" Ron asked dumbly, he hadn't expected her to tell him he was right.

"There are Slytherins, and then there are Slytherins. The gits are Slytherins, by contrast we are Slytherins. Do you understand?"

"No," Ron admitted.

"My house is split between those that are ambitious, and those that are slimy Death Eater trainees like Draco Malfoy. Let's say Draco Malfoy were to change his name to Draco Weasley tomorrow, would that make all Weasleys into slimy gits?"

"No but . . ."

"Then what is you decided to change your name to Ron Malfoy, would that make all Malfoys good?"

"No but I'd never . . ."

"Of course not," Morgana agreed. "You see, there are good Slytherins and just like changing Draco's name to Weasley wouldn't change him into a good person, the fact that we're Slytherins doesn't make us bad. Why don't you take the time to get to know us before you make any decisions?"

"Ok," Ron said reluctantly.

"Good," Morgana said warmly. "I was hoping you'd say that." Keeping someone like Ron, who came from a prominent Progressive family, with Harry's new faction would do a lot to enhance the boy's reputation. "Now why don't you go join the others? Just tell yourself that they haven't gotten corrupted by the other Slytherins yet."

After Ron joined the group, Hermione detached herself from it and walked over to Morgana with a look of confusion on her face.

"Morgana," Hermione began. "May I ask you a question?"

"What is it Hermione?"

"You said it was common among the Traditionalists to make betrothal arrangements for their children around first year?"

"Mostly for daughters," Morgana said. "Sons are usually a bit older, why?"

"Are you betrothed to someone?"

"I was."

"Was?"

"Let me tell you about my husband," Morgana began. "Or rather, the man who would have been my husband if he were not killed in a duel over some trifling matter."

"I'm sorry," Hermione said sympathetically. "I . . ."

"I'm not," Morgana interrupted. "If he hadn't been killed then I would have had to find a way to arrange things myself, hopefully before the wedding. The man, Martin Pondleroy was five years older than my father and I would have been his third wife. I met him when I was ten and he was 'generous' enough to allow me to go to Hogwarts and he also mentioned that he was 'patient' enough to wait until my thirteenth birthday before consummating the relationship. I was twelve when he died and dreading my thirteenth birthday, the day he fought that duel was the happiest of my life."

AN: Got a few ideas for this from one of Drake's fics. They're very readable and I suggest that you give them a look, only place I know of that they're archived is the file section on Potter's Place 3 which is a Yahoo Group for those of you that don't know. Making the effort to write a likable Ron in my fics, and a kick ass Ron in Thief. This Ron feels a bit guilty at what happened to Harry and Hermione and is doing his best to live up to the family reputation after his brothers cornered him and told him what he was already telling himself. Could have made Ron the bastard but I've seen a lot of that and . . . well, it's not easy for me to write him as a good sidekick rather than a bastard or a hero in his own . . . well, perhaps I shouldn't use the word 'hero.' If you don't think arranged marriage with children that age happened within the last hundred years, read 'My India' by Jim Corbett . . . actually read everything by Jim Corbett that you have a chance to, guy was a bit crazy but . . . well, the guy was a bit crazy, interesting books though.

Omake: The Promise

"Harry." Morgana knelt so that their conversation was at eye level. "If all else fails then I'm going to need your permission to pull out my trump card."

"Trump card?"

"It'll allow me to force the issue in our favor," she explained.

"Ok," Harry agreed. "I trust you."



"You shouldn't," she said gently. "Remember, the only person who won't betray you is you."

Later, at the Wizengamot . . .

"I wish to address the Wizengamot," Morgana said loudly. While the rules stated that anyone could bring a matter before their attention, tradition dictated that one be a government official or the head of a family.

"The chair recognises Morgana Speakerman," Dumbledore said. "Speak child."

"Harry Potter is known by many as a hero to the wizarding world," Morgana said loudly. "But the conditions he is forced to live under are deplorable, more suited to a house elf than to 'the-boy-who-lived.'"

"What do you suggest we do?" Another member asked.

"I wish to become his guardian until he comes of age," Morgana replied. "To teach and guide him as he enters our society."

"Don't you think you're a bit young for that?" Dumbledore asked with a smile. "No . . . I believe that . . ."

"I Morgana Speakerman swear on my magic, my honor, and my life that I will faithfully serve and defend Harry Potter. That I will forever place his interests before my own, that I will be honest with him, and that I shall make his house my own."

Several eyes widened as she completed her oath and a smug grin appeared on her face. Try to reject me now you bastards, she thought savagely.

"What happened?" Harry whispered to his friends.

"She just married you," Daphne said in shock.

"What?"

"Only if you agree," Tracy said quickly. "Otherwise she's just suborned herself to you. They don't have any choice now, they have to let you stay with her."

It won't be so bad, Morgana consoled herself as the members of the Wizengamot competed to see who could be the loudest and most annoying. She kicked herself for not thinking of it before but it would also make her an acceptable Traditionalist Minister as they'd assume she was Harry's puppet, his way of staying out of the public eye while retaining power. Yup, she thought to herself. It looked like things were going to work out despite fate's best efforts.

Still later . . .

"With your permission I'd like to join the Aurors Academy," Morgana said mildly. "I believe that it would benefit my future election campaign . . . not to mention make me a better caretaker for you. What boy would turn down a cute bedable bodyguard?" It was hard to keep from giggling at his reaction to that last statement, he was such a cute little boy.

"I won't stop you from doing what you want to do," Harry replied.

"Now that's just the sort of thing you need to avoid saying," Morgana said sternly. "If I had wished I could try to use statements like that to get around my oath." She admonished.

"You won't though will you?"

"I'm not planning to no," she admitted. "But just because I'm not planning to doesn't mean I won't at some point in time. You have to be careful about these things Harry."

Omake: Bride Price

"Since he's The Potter, he'll have to negotiate with mum and dad himself," Daphne said. "After that, I'm sure mum and dad will help him if he asks for it."

Later . . .

"We'll coach him before he does it," Daphne said. "He has an advantage in that I know what they want from him and I have no problem telling Harry. Loyalty to family is all well and good but loyalty to my future husband is much more important."

Later still . . .

"I was thinking you could give us a bride price of five hundred Galleons and . . ."

"Five Hundred?" Harry screamed. "Are you mad?"

"I realise that's a lot of money," Daphne's father said with a sigh. He was willing to make allowances because of the boy's youth, but this was going a bit far. "But . . ."

"A lot?" Harry growled. "For her? You'll take a minimum of one thousand and I demand an apology for the insult you delivered to my future bride."

Daphne's heart had stopped when Harry had started yelling, this wasn't how it was supposed to go. They'd spent hours coaching him on what to say, he was supposed to counter with two fifty and eventually offer to make one of his children the heir to the Greengrass name not . . . her jaw dropped when her father replied.

"D . . . done," he stammered.

"I'm sorry I got so worked up," Harry sighed. "But you have to understand that I take insults very seriously."

"There is no need to apologize," the other man said with a look of pride. "Of course a Greengrass should demand a high price. A pleasure dealing with you Mr. Potter."

"The pleasure was all mine," Harry replied.

"Though there does remain a small matter I'd like to discuss with you," he continued.

"What?" Harry asked.

"As you may know, my daughter is the last of the Greengrass family. I was hoping that we could come to an agreement regarding that," he continued. "I was hoping to persuade you to name one of your male children the heir to my family to keep it alive."

"I think we can come to an understanding," Harry repeated the words Morgana was whispering into his ear.

"Excellent, since the Greengrass name is so valuable I won't bequeath less than ten thousand Galleons in return . . . do we have a deal Mr. Potter?"

"We have a deal," Harry agreed.

"Wonderful."

Disclaimer: Just give up and try again somewhere else.

Transfer

Harry . . .

"You wanted to see me sir?" Harry asked as he walked into the Headmaster's office.

"Yes . . . I was hoping that you could explain this," Dumbledore said in a kind voice.

"What?" Harry asked. "Oh, you mean my transfer papers."

"Yes, those."

"Well, I've just decided that Hogwarts isn't the place for me what with the constant attempts on my life, the lack of educational opportunities, and biased teaching staff . . . well, also the teaching staff that goes so far out of their way to show that they aren't biased that they end up being biased. The road to hell and all that."

"Were you thinking of any specific Professors?" Dumbledore asked with a sick feeling.

"Snape."

"That's Professor . . ."

"I'm not a student here any longer," Harry interrupted. "So I'll call the son of a bitch anything I want to."

"Yes . . . well, surely it's not that bad."

"Surely I could give a damn," Harry replied cheerfully. "Like I said, I'm not a student here any longer. Snape can be as biased as he likes, it's no concern of mine."

"May I tell you something in confidence?" Dumbledore asked in a low voice.

"If you like."

"Severus has an important role to play, a role that requires him to . . ."

"Be a bastard and you should just suck it up because I'm not going to do anything," Harry interjected in a fair impersonation of Dumbledore's voice. "Or something along those lines, am I right."

"I . . . what about the other kind of Professor?"

"McGonagall doesn't do anything to minimise Snape's behavior," Harry said with a yawn. "Or to reign in Draco and his little friends, will that be all? I really have to start packing my things."

"You'd really leave Hogwarts?"

"For a chance to get a good education and a decent learning environment?" Harry asked incredulously. "You bet your ass I would."

"What about your friends?"

"What about them?" Harry asked. "Hermione's transfer request is below mine and Ron's is below hers, not sure who else decided to make the switch."

Dumbledore paled and took a few seconds to rifle through the stack on his desk. "Oh dear."

"Lots of students then?" Harry asked mildly.

"Most of them," Dumbledore croaked.

"Imagine that," Harry said in wonder. "Never thought that little speech of mine would have that much effect."

"Harry, I'm afraid I can't allow you to . . ."

"And I'm afraid you can't stop me," Harry said with a grin. "Hermione found the law you know, the one that made it illegal to prevent a student from receiving a magical education if they had the ability. One of yours wasn't it?"

"Yes but I fail to see how it applies?"

"You're seeking to prevent me from receiving my education," Harry explained. "I'm sure you'll find that the law doesn't care if I'm already getting one. The important thing is that I refuse to stay at an institution as poor as Hogwarts."

"What if I were to make things better?" Dumbledore tried desperately.

"Then I'm sure future students will thank you," Harry said flippantly. "Good day Headmaster, I'm afraid I don't have any more time to waste dealing with your petty concerns."

Hermione . . .

"You wished to speak with me Professor McGonagall?"

"Yes," Minerva agreed. "May I be blunt?"

"Please."

"Why are you leaving Hogwarts to go to another school?"

"Several reasons," Hermione replied. "The main two are Harry and the fact that I can get a better education elsewhere."

"Harry meaning that since Mister Potter is leaving, you are choosing to join him?"

"Correct."

"Would you please explain the comment about another school offering a superior education? After all, Hogwarts is the finest . . ."

"With all due respect, Hogwarts is not even in the top ten." Hermione interrupted sharply. "In fact, it is currently hovering between being taught by a group of howler monkeys and getting no magical education at all. The fact is that Hogwarts has a sub par staff and an environment that is not conducive to learning."

"Would you care to explain that?" Minerva growled.

"Certainly," Hermione agreed. "Why don't I just list the departments that do more to hinder a student than teach?"

"Please do."

"Divination, Defence Against the Dark Arts, Astronomy, Muggle Studies, and Potions are the worst of the lot."

"Astronomy?"

"Is decades behind what's known in the muggle world," Hermione said primly.

"Muggle Studies?"

"Is a joke," Hermione replied. "Will you take my word as a muggle born or would you like me to list examples?"

"I will take your word," Minerva sighed. "What about Potions? Severus is one of the finest Potions Masters in Europe."

"No he isn't," Hermione said quickly. "After doing a bit of research, I've learned that the only person in the school that even makes the top fifty is the Headmaster at forty eight. When we bring in the rest to the world the Headmaster would struggle to make the top thousand. Leaving that aside, ability or not the man is a dreadful educator and he has almost single handedly destroyed the learning environment. Something I'll note, you've done nothing to stop."

"Ms. Granger I . . ."

"Have allowed him to show blatant favoritism to his house? Have done nothing to curb the behavior of his pets? Have allowed him to show blatant and harmful bias against Harry and several other students? Please stop me if you think I've made an untrue statement Professor."

"I . . . Albus said . . ."

"So your excuse is that the Headmaster has forced you to be derelict in your duty?" Hermione asked coldly. "And you lacked the moral strength to resign in protest? I'm sorry Professor but I am afraid that I cannot accept that excuse, good day."



"Good day Ms. Granger," Minerva said weakly as her star pupil stormed out. Perhaps she'd have more luck with one of the Weasleys?

Luna . . .

"Hello Ms. Lovegood," Professor Flitwick said with a kind smile.

"Hello Mister Flitwick," Luna replied with a matching smile.

"I see that you've chosen to transfer to another school," he began.

"You do?" Luna said in delight. "That's wonderful."

"It is?"

"Why yes," Luna agreed. "It is."

"Moving right along," the Ravenclaw head of house said quickly. "Could you tell me why you've chosen to transfer to another school?"

"I could," Luna agreed. "Why?"

"Why what?"

"Uh huh."

"Why have you chosen to transfer to another school?" He sighed.

"Because if I don't then it will be much more difficult to seduce Harry," Luna said immediately.

"You want to seduce Harry?"

"I do?"

"You just said you did," he said in frustration.

"That's right," Luna said with a smile. "I did."

"So why do you want to seduce Harry?"

"Because Harry was nice to me," Luna said with sudden seriousness.  
"When no one else was."

"I . . . see . . ."

"And there's also the fact that Susan and Hanna are going too," Luna continued. "And you know what they say about Hufflepuffs?"

"What do they say about Hufflepuffs?" He asked before he could stop himself.

"That they have good teamwork," Luna said with a happy smile.  
"Think about it."

"But I thought you said that you wanted to seduce Harry?"

"Sharing is caring," Luna giggled.

"I . . . see, well that will be all Ms. Lovegood."

"It will?"

"It will," he confirmed.

"I think so," she agreed. "Bye Mister Flitwick."

"Goodbye Ms. Lovegood."

Ron . . .

"Come in Mr. Weasley," Minerva requested.

"Sure thing," Ron agreed. "What can I do for you?"

"I was just wondering if you would be willing to tell me why you're transferring from Hogwarts?"

"Why would I stay here when all my friends are leaving?" Ron asked with an odd look.

"What about Quidditch?" Minerva asked weakly. "Does your next school have a Quidditch team?"

"No," Ron said cheerfully. "It's got better."

"Better?"

"Quodpot," Ron explained. "Did you know that there are enough schools to play each other rather than just having a Quidditch Cup? They play more games in a week than we do in a year. Not to mention the fact that professional Quodpot players make one hundred times what Professional Quidditch players do, even if I don't get chosen Hermione found out that the teams like to recruit heavily from overseas when they can and they have to offer extra galleons to do it successfully. Not to mention the fact that there won't be any Slytherins."

"I see, thank you Mr. Weasley."

"No problem," Ron said as he walked out.

Hufflepuff House . . .

"I've called you all here to ask why," Professor Sprout said. "Why have you all chosen to leave Hogwarts?"

Several eyes turned to look at Susan. "Because we're Hufflepuffs," Susan said firmly. "We stick with our own."

"Still . . ."

"Harry is one of us," another student said. "He goes, we go."

"He taught us to defend ourselves," Hanna agreed.

"He's our leader," Susan added. "Does that answer your question Professor?"

"It does," Professor Sprout sighed. "Thank you."

Daphne and Tracy . . .

"Out with it," Snape barked. "Why are the two of you betraying your house, your blood, and your heritage?"

"Because you're an idiot," Daphne sneered. "You needlessly antagonize one of the most powerful students in the school. He may not choose to use it but he has more influence in his little finger than you'll ever have. One word to the press and . . . but you don't understand that do you? All you know of power is brute force, how disappointing that the head of a house that once prided itself on subtlety and cunning has so little of either."

"You insolent child," Snape fumed. "Get out, both of you."

"Not to mention the deal we have with Luna," Tracy added over her shoulder. "She says she needs our help because no girl can seduce Harry herself."

"Arg." Snape grabbed a paperweight off his desk and flung it at the closing door.

Ginny . . .

"You want to ask why I'm transferring out with the others don't you?" Ginny asked as she walked in.

"Yes," Minerva agreed.

"I can't let Luna seduce Harry all by herself can I?" Sha laughed. "Will that be all Professor?"

"Yes, thank you Ms. Weasley."

The Meeting . . .

"I've come to a rather . . . uncomfortable conclusion," Minerva began. "The children are correct, Hogwarts is no longer a place of learning. It had become a place where a petty and spiteful man has been allowed free reign to do as he pleases to the detriment of the students." She finished with a sharp look directed at Snape.

"If Harry leaves, Hufflepuff House will go with him. I . . . my resignation is on your desk Albus," Sprout said sadly. "What's the point of being a Professor in an empty school?"

"My Ravensclaws are also leaving as a group," Flitwick said. "I doubt more than half a dozen will stay behind. It was inevitable after that essay Ms. Granger wrote comparing Hogwarts to other institutes of learning. I'm afraid we don't compare at all to several schools in the Americas, Asia, India, or even outer Mongolia."

"Outer Mongolia?"

"I'm told that there is a very good program if you wish to study mare's milk as a potion ingredient," Flitwick replied. "As a consequence their Potions department is . . . well, you get the picture."

"We're losing a couple students from Slytherin," Snape said with an unconcerned shrug. "No one of any value."

"Harry is the key," Dumbledore spoke up. "If we can find a way to force him to stay then we will be able to keep the majority of our students."

AN: Not sure where this came from. Perhaps a little piece of me screaming about the lack of 'Harry in another school' story lines. Thanks go to ausfinbar who provided a couple ideas for this.

Omake: Dating Luna

"Hermione, may I speak with you for a moment."

"What is it Luna?" Hermione replied.

"You live in the muggle world with Harry don't you?"

"Yeees?" Hermione agreed slowly. "Why?"

"I was just worried about you having sex with Harry over the summer," Luna said bluntly. "So I wanted to talk with you about that."

"Don't worry Luna," Hermione said quickly. She'd known the blond was a bit unsure of her relationship with Harry, but she'd never known it was this bad. "I'd never . . ."

"What?" Luna asked in alarm. "Why not? Isn't he good enough for you?"

"Wait . . . what?"

"I'm worried you won't keep him occupied," Luna explained. "I don't like the thought of Harry getting all pent up over the summer and I had hoped that you'd be willing to help me out."

"But . . . what about you Luna?"

"Me?" The blond asked. "I'll be in Sweden with Father, now about you and Harry . . ."

"Luna, I don't know what kind of girl you think I am. But I am not going to sleep with a boy that I'm not at least dating seriously."

"Oh," Luna said in understanding. "I understand now."

"Good," Hermione sighed in relief.

"And I must say that you didn't need to bring this up in such a round about way Hermione," Luna lectured. "Next time I want you to just come out and ask."

"Thank you Luna I . . . wait, ask what?"

"If you can date Harry of course," Luna said. "And the answer is yes."

"But you're dating Harry," Hermione protested.

"Yes, and I appreciate the fact that you were polite enough to ask me if you could date him too first. Oh, I'm sure Harry will be ever so happy to find out that he's dating two girls now. Especially when one of them has been his best friend since first year, wait till I tell him."

"Luna no."

"So you want to tell him then?" Luna asked. "Well, ok but be sure to do it soon."

"Luna I . . . I don't want to date Harry with you."

"Well I'm certainly not going to break up with him," Luna growled. "And that's quite rude of you to try to take him for yourself like that Hermione."

"That's not what I ment," Hermione said quickly.

"Well it's also not good to go back on what you said like that," Luna admonished. "Aren't you supposed to be in Gryffindor? Just gather up your courage and ask. Now, if you're not going to tell him then I am. You're too good a friend to let you throw this relationship away."

"Luna I . . you . . . um . . ."

AN: Might have to write this some time, Harry's relationship with Luna. Don't know why I like to write Luna as a girl that likes to build Harems for herself, but it's fun to do so . . .

Disclaimer: Mostly an outline but it has what I wanted to put out, might pick this up in the future but I doubt it.

## A Different Triwizard

"Wands out?" Cedric asked.

"I think we'd better check something first," Harry replied. "Grab the trophy."

"What good do you think that will . . ."

Cedric reappeared back at Hogwarts in front of a surprised crowd. "We've got to go back for Harry," he shouted. "Aurors, were are the bloody Aurors."

"Calm yourself Mr. Diggory and tell us what has happened," Dumbledore advised.

"The cup was a trap," Cedric said breathlessly. "Harry's still there, we've got to go back for him."

"Portkey's used up it's magic," Moody advised.

Hufflepuff Common Room, several months earlier . . .

"Quiet," Cedric growled at one of his house mates. He was sick and tired of hearing people insult Hogwarts' other champion. "Let me ask you something, why do you think Harry would have put his own name in the bloody cup?"

"Well . . . he's a Gryffindor," the other student said lamely.

"And we all know they're glory hounds right?" Cedric asked. "Let's start with his first year, we all know what happened right? Well, who's heard Harry talk about what happened?"

"I asked him once," Susan volunteered. "He just sort of . . . shrank, said he didn't want to talk about it."

"Then let's look at his second year," Cedric continued. "Anyone hear Harry's version of what happened?"



"We were talking about it after Harry got out of the hospital wing," another student said slowly. "Harry heard what we were talking about and turned around, I . . . I don't think he's ever told anyone what happened."

"His third year he had a murder after him and he kept getting attacked by the bloody dementors," Cedric sighed. "And I've never heard two words from him about what he's done. Accept it, Harry's not a normal Gryffindor. He's someone who's actually brave, not the usual dregs the house attracts."

"Bloody loyal to those friends of his too," Hanna said. "You realise what that means? It means he's a Hufflepuff at heart, hat got blinded by his bloody lack of fear."

"So you know what I think this is?" Cedric's voice raised. "Based on what we know of Harry's history, I don't think it's likely that he put his name in for the glory, I don't think it's likely he put his name in at all. We all saw how dangerous the first task was, I think that someone is trying to use this tournament to murder Harry Potter. They failed in first year, they failed in second, and they failed in third. Maybe they think the fourth time's a charm?"

"It's our duty to help him as a fellow Hufflepuff," Susan said with a smile. "Sod the bloody hat, what's it know? We all know what house Harry belongs in."

Cedric gave the girl a grateful nod. "Exactly, who's with me?"

The cheer that greeted his words deafened the room.

IIIIIIII

Harry's first indication that something had changed came when he walked into the great Hall to find a large sign above the Hufflepuff table proclaiming that they supported Harry Potter, Hogwarts' youngest champion.

"Wasn't us Harry," Fred said in response to Harry's questioning look.

"No trick Harry," Cedric said with a grin. "Just took a little while for some of us to realise that you're one of us. No matter which one of us takes the cup, it'll still be a victory for Hogwarts right?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed.

"And a victory for Hogwarts is a victory for Hufflepuff House," Cedric finished with a smile. "Besides, you didn't even want to compete did you? It's not fair to blame you for the latest weird thing to happen in your life."

"Thanks Cedric."

"Just remember to duck when the bad guys reveal themselves," Cedric joked. "Wouldn't want that famous luck of yours to disappear at the wrong time would we?"

"Bad guys?"

"Someone's behind this," Cedric said with a shrug. "And they're not after me, be careful Harry."

"I will Cedric," Harry agreed. "I'll be careful." And I'll do my best to keep you out of it, he added in his mind. It was his fight, Harry didn't want anyone else to get caught up in it.

"Thanks Harry," Cedric said with a grin.

"Looks like the Puffs found their common sense," Fred said conversationally.

"Guess we'll have to cancel a few things we had planned," George agreed.

"What a waste," Fred sighed. "A shame we can't just move it to Slytherin table."

"Why can't we?"

"Too predictable."

"There's always the staff table," Harry interjected.

"Harry?"

"Bloody hell, the next time you get an idea for one of our pranks--"

Harry looked down at his feet in shame.

"-you bring it to us without delay. A crime to have a mind like that without telling us."

|||||

"May I Speak with tu?"

"What is it Fleur?" Cedric asked nervously.

"Do ou really theenk dis eez a plot to keel Arrie?" The French champion's eyes flashed.

"I do," Cedric agreed.

"I see," the French girl muttered as she walked off.

|||||

The months passed and the four contestants gathered to complete their final task.

"Come ere Arrie," Fleur said with a playful smile.

"What is it Fleur?" Harry asked nervously.

"A kees," the part Veela said as he lips brushed against his cheek.  
"For luck, tu will need it to beat me Arrie."

"T . . . thanks," Harry stammered.

"Tu are welcome 'Arrie," she replied. Fleur noted the lip marks on the boy's cheek with a satisfied smile.

Things proceeded as they had a hundred times in a hundred universes leaving Harry and Cedric looking nervously around a cemetery.

A calm smile appeared on Harry's face as he took stock of the situation. It had been impossible not to hear the rumors, impossible to come to the same conclusion as so many others had. The contest was another murder attempt, Harry had decided months before that no one else was going to be caught up in his fight.

"Wands out?" Cedric asked.

"I think we'd better check something first," Harry replied. "Grab the trophy."

"What good do you think that will . . ."

Harry allowed himself a brief moment of pleasure at the shocked look on Cedric's face as the portkey activated. "I was hoping so," he muttered to himself. "You were right Ced, but it's between me and them. You've got no place here."

IIIIIIIIII

"Did you find Harry?" Cedric demanded. After the rescue party returned.

"We found a war zone," one of the Aurors replied. "Boy put of one hell of a fight."

"We haven't . . . identified Harry yet," Dumbledore said sadly. "I haven't given up hope that he might have escaped."

The tight looks on the Auror's faces was enough to tell Cedric the truth, his friend was dead.

The next morning, dozens of owls flew into the Great Hall delivering Daily Prophets to grieving students. Several choked back sobs as they read what details could be had of what was being called Harry's last stand. One owl separated itself from the pack and landed on Cedric's untouched breakfast.

"You're Harry's owl Hedwig aren't you?" Cedric asked. "What have you got for me girl?" He undid the note and closed his eyes. "It's from Harry, he wrote it before the third task." Hufflepuff House gathered

around to listen as Cedric began reading. "Cedric, if you're reading this then you lived and I did not. I gave this letter to Hedwig before coming down to the third task and told her to deliver it if I didn't come back. Looks like you were right and the tournament was another murder attempt and it looks like my luck gave out. I just wanted you to know that I'm sorry but it was my fight, I couldn't have lived with myself if you got dragged into it. Have a good life Cedric, and thank you for being a friend. It's signed Harry Potter," Cedric finished sadly. "He didn't have to do that."

"Yes he did," Susan said proudly. "He's a Hufflepuff, he gave up his life for a friend."

IIIIIIII

"Madame Bones, I've got a report on the breakdown for the newest recruits."

"Well?"

"Half the Gryffindor graduating class, four Ravenclaws, three Slytherins, and the entire Hufflepuff class."

"Not surprising," Amelia said with a nod.

"Why not Chief?"

"They're Hufflepuffs, one of their own was taken." A cold smile appeared on Amelia's face. "We want a bit of payback."

AN: What can I say, I get an idea and I write it.

You want him alive? Well, I suppose . . .

"Wha . . . where am I?" Harry groaned.

"Ou are safe Arry."

"Fleur?"

"Oui Arry," the girl agreed. "You saved Gabrielle, we could doo no less for you."

Omake by meteoricshipyards:

"Tu 'ave been unconscious for a month, 'Arry."

"A month?"

"Yes. We 'ave taken care of you."

"I helped!" came the voice of a little girl.

"Oui, Gabrielle 'elped."

"Thank you, Gabrielle."

The girl beamed. "I fed you soup while you slept and washed you. Do you know you have an enormous..."

"Yes, Gabrielle, I'm sure 'Arry knows."

There is a line there stolen from "A Boy and His Wand" by fblne Patton

Disclaimer: Another Harry got a gun story line, blame Peter Hathaway Capstick, W.D.M. Bell, and a few dozen others.

Working title: Ivory

A wise man once said that those who are willing to sacrifice freedom for security, deserve neither freedom nor security. It was a sentiment that prompted Harry to take his leave from his . . . home.

Harry crept out of Dudley's second bedroom with one of the large boy's old knapsacks over one shoulder. Harry couldn't handle being cooped up anymore, he just had to get a little space.

Stepping over the sleeping guard, Harry was struck by a sudden idea and with an evil grin he grabbed the invisibility cloak and stuffed it into his pack. It was always good to have a spare and while he'd have loved to stay behind to watch his . . . 'family's' reaction when they found a drunk sleeping it off on their doorstep, he had other things to do.

Quickening his pace, Harry hurried down the street and summoned the knight bus.

"Welcome to . . ."

"Are there any shopping districts aside from Diagon and Knockturn?" Harry interrupted.

"Of course," Stan agreed. "What're you looking for?"

"Some place I can find a room and withdraw a bit of money from Gringotts," Harry replied.

"The old quarter at Cannon Street work for you?" Stan asked. "Looks a bit tarnished after Diagon but it's got everything you asked for."

"That'll be just fine," Harry agreed. Doing his best to hide his confusion, Harry took his seat and waited for the ride to come to an end.

"Here we are," Stan said as the bus rolled to a stop. "Just walk toward the London Stone, push on the grill when no one is looking."

"Right," Harry agreed. "Thanks Stan."

"All part of the service," Stan replied as he shut the door.

Harry got off the bus and after taking a look around, pushed the grill. The grate squeaked open and the stone moved aside to reveal a narrow doorway. On the other side was another world.

|||||

"Dung, hey Dung wake up."

"Mwa?" The Order member groaned and got to his feet. "What's up?"

"Where's your invisibility cloak?" Tonks demanded.

"Must have forgot it," Dung replied. "You here to relieve me?"

"Yeah," Tonks agreed. "Anything happen?"

"It's all been quiet," Dung replied. "Harry hasn't left his room since I got here . . . since anyone's got here."

"Nother nice boring shift for me then," Tonks said with false cheer. "See you tomorrow."

"Later."

|||||

Harry wandered up the street feeling like he'd just entered the magical world. It was all different, nothing like Diagon. The buildings seemed to be an odd mix of ancient and new. Eventually his attention was captured by a bulletin board, more specifically an advertisement offering top dollar for Potions ingredients and Wand components. Harry grinned, it was a rare thing in his life to have a chance to seek adventure for the sake of adventure without the world hanging in the balance. He carefully memorised the address and walked up the street to meet his destiny.



What'd ya need kid?" A woman asked as Harry entered the building.

"Saw an ad?"

"Forget it," she said immediately. "It's not worth doing if you're not already part of the business."

"Gotta start somewhere," Harry replied.

"You sure you want to take on this job kid?" The dealer asked with a frown. "Harvesting Potions ingredients isn't a dangerous profession unless you want to make it pay and there are safer ways to make money."

Well." Harry gave a boyish smile. "If I can't have a nice quiet life then why not have a short merry one? Yes I'm sure."

"Alright kid," she sighed. "I tried. There's a pub up the street, you should be able to find one of the pro's drinking to their dead buddies there and if you're lucky they'll give you a few pointers before cutting you loose."

"Thanks."

"And don't partner up with anyone," she called after him. "Not unless you know them and trust them. Better to go it alone than have a bad partner."

"Right," he agreed.

"Good luck," she said softly as he left. "And I hope I see you again."

Harry followed the woman's directions and found himself in a dingy pub. The only other patron was a man in kakis and a pith helmet.

"To Frank . . . you were a good friend, and better bait . . . you will be missed. TO . . . uh . . . George . . . or maybe it was Stan?" He mused. "Whatever your name was, you'll be missed too . . . both of you. You were great bait, one might even go so far as to say that the two of you were master bait . . . ers."

"Excuse me," Harry said.

"What dya need kid?" He slurred.

"Just needed a few pointers on how to break into the business of harvesting potions ingredients," Harry replied. "You got any?"

"Well." He seemed to consider the question. "Get quality gear, good gear can save your ass. Bad gear can end your life."

"What kind of gear?" Harry persisted. "What's the most important thing I need?"

"Most important thing huh?"

"Yes."

"It takes a platoon of wizards to stop a Nundu," the man said with a grin. "You know how many muggles it takes?"

"A hundred?" Harry asked uncertainly.

"Just one," the man corrected. "Muggles are very good at causing death and destruction."

"But . . . magic . . ."

"Is what does in most Wizards who try this business," the man said quickly. "If your only tool is a hammer then every problem looks like a nail. Only problem is that not every problem is a nail, you try a hammer and . . . well . . ."

"So what do you use?" Harry asked.

"Same thing muggles do," he replied. "A large caliber rifle. Put a bullet in the right place and you can stop just about anything."

"Where do I get something like that?"

"You can either buy all your kit new or you can walk down the street a bit and buy it almost new," he replied. "I'd go with the second."

“Almost new?”

“Used only a day or two,” he laughed. “Just have to clean off the previous owner and you're set.”

“Clean off . . .”

“Like I said,” he said with a feral grin. “Only used a day or two. Average life expectancy is about three months, that's with some of the old timers tossed in to play with the odds a bit. In real life, you live that long and you've got a good chance of lasting longer. Most people last a bit less then a week, two on the outside.”

“Where do I get kitted out?”

“Shop up the street with a red sign,” he replied. “Can't miss it, s'where the heirs go to sell off their benefactor's old junk. Good deals to be had by all.”

“Thanks.”

“Where was I?” Harry heard the man mutter as he left. “Right, to . . . Phil . . .”

Harry followed the man's directions and soon found himself entering the aforementioned shop. “What can I do for you lad?”

“I need to get kitted out,” Harry replied.

“You want used or new?”

“Slightly used,” Harry said with a grin. “What do I need?”

“Everything,” he said. “Most important thing is a good pair of boots thought. That's not the sort of thing you can buy here, there's a boot maker up the street that can get you custom pair. No sense dieing if you have to do it with sore feet 'eh?”

“I guess.”

“Clothes I can do, all double stiched. Get two pairs and you're set.”

"What about a rifle?"

"Got three in stock right now," the shopkeep replied. "A six hundred nitro double, a three seventy five Holland and Holland bolt, and a four sixteen Rigby bolt. What'd you prefer?"

"Uh . . ."

"Ammo will be hard to find for the nitro," he sighed. "And bolt action can also hold more rounds."

"Which one is better?" Harry asked uncertainly.

"Depends on what you want to do," he replied. "The double rifle gives you a quick follow up shot, but a slow reload and cartridges will be hard to find. Three seventy five is a good general caliber and popular enough so that it'll be no problem to feed it, four sixteen is a bit heavy for a lot of things but it's also good. The bolt action rifles are both excellent quality, both Mauser actions which gives you the claw. Both have peep sights and both are take downs . . . means you can easily take it apart into two pieces to save space."

"What about the double?"

The double was hand made by William Jeffrey & co, just oozes quality don't it?

"Ok," Harry agreed. "I guess I'll take all of them."

"They won't come cheap," he cautioned. "Even used you're talking a couple thousand Galleons."

"That's fine," Harry agreed. "Just get everything together and I'll come back later."

"Right lad," the man agreed. "Just be sure you look through this before you go out?"

"A book?" Harry asked sceptically.

"On shot placement," he agreed. "It's the most important thing you need to know if you're going to go after dangerous game. To some extent it doesn't matter so much what you're shooting with so much as where you hit your target. This thing'll show you where to hit it and what to harvest."

"Oh . . . thanks," Harry said after a moment of thought.

"There are a couple others you should flip through but this is the most important, understand me? Even if you don't do anything else you need to look through this."

"I . . . ok," Harry agreed. "I will."

"Right then."

IIIIIIIIII

"Damn it," Tonks complained. "This job sucks." A flicker of movement caused her to look up at Harry's window. "And there's Hedwig, going out to hunt. Least he has his bloody owl up there with him, better than no company at all."

IIIIIIIIII

Harry approached the one and only teller in Gringotts satellite branch. "What do you need?"

"I'm buying an outfit to go to Africa to harvest potions ingredients and . . ."

"Right," the goblin interrupted. "Hand over your key and fill out your will while I'm getting your gold, be sure not to sign it until I'm here to witness it."

"Uh . . . ok," Harry agreed. "Here."

The goblin snatched the key out of his hand and walked away from the window. For lack of anything better to do, Harry began writing his will after the goblin had left.

"Here," the goblin returned and flung a bag of Galleons at Harry. "You finished your will yet?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed.

"Let me see it," the goblin demanded. "Fine, sign it." Harry did with a flourish. "If there isn't anything else, then get out and stop contaminating my oxygen."

"Goodbye," Harry said politely. He grabbed the bag and walked down the street to the boot maker.

"What can I do for you?" The cobbler asked.

"I need a good pair of boots," Harry replied. "Suitable for Africa."

"Right away sir," he agreed. "I don't suppose . . ."

"No, I've made up my mind."

"What quality do you want?"

"The very best," Harry answered immediately.

"Let me take a few measurements then," he said. "Ok, I'll have them done in no time. I suggest you make your purchases and get your portkey, get everything done you can before returning."

"Thanks."

Harry left the Cobbler's shop and walked up the street to buy a portkey that would take him one step closer to the wilds of Africa. "Here for a new pair of specs?" An old woman asked as Harry walked into the shop.

"Hoping to get a portkey," Harry replied.

"Wrong shop," she said with a smile. "You want the one next door. But you may as well come in, from the way you've been squinting I'd say that there's something wrong with the specs you're using."

"I guess I could use a new pair of glasses," Harry admitted with a frown. "What do you have?"

"What do you do?" She asked. "Different professions require different things."

"I'm going to Africa," Harry said with a grin. "And planning to return."

"Oh," she said dully. The old woman seemed to deflate. "I understand how exciting it seems but you do understand the risks don't you?"

"I've got a very good understanding of the risks, they don't bother me. I've had my share of danger before. You might say that 'Danger' is my middle name," he finished dryly.

"Then can I suggest these," she laid a pair of mountaineering sunglasses on the table. "They'll adjust their tint to compensate for the ambient light, they'll gather more light when it gets dark, and they'll expand your peripheral vision. Something that might come in handy if you persist in your foolish plan."

"Thank you." Harry paid for his purchase and tried them on. "They work great."

"Goodbye kid," she said sadly.

"Bye," Harry called over his shoulder as he walked out to procure his portkey. Harry walked into the shop and tried to introduce himself, "hello I'm . . ."

"No names," the grizzled man behind the counter snapped. "Makes things easier all round, you want a portkey to the Lunatic line don't you?"

"I'm trying to get to Africa," Harry replied.

"That'll do then," the man said gruffly. "Won't be more then a day or two wait, should be less den dat if'n you hurry."

"Thanks."

"Don't thank me lad, not till you're on your way back."

|||||

"Ah Nymphadora," Dumbledore said with a smile. "How did your shift go?"

"Boring as hell," Tonks replied honestly. "Only thing that happened all night was Harry letting his owl out to hunt."

"His owl hmmm?" Dumbledore asked with a smile. "Thank you Nymphadora."

"If that's all I need to get home to catch a few hours of sleep," Tonks muttered. "These triple shifts are killing me."

"We all must make sacrifices for the greater good," Dumbledore replied. "And speaking of sacrifices, I'm afraid that owl can't stay with Harry." Dumbledore muttered to himself. "She's much too noticeable, I'm sure Harry will understand. It's just for the summer after all, she'll be waiting in the school's owlery for him when he returns to Hogwarts."

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"You ever used a rifle before kid?"

"Never even touched one," Harry admitted.

"Well . . . these two'll be easy to learn on . . . well, compared to the nitro rifle anyway," the shopkeeper said after a moment of thought. "First let's get the stocks adjusted to you."

"Stocks?"

"The wooden parts," he sighed. "If they're adjusted to your body they'll be easier to use."

"Oh."

"They're both fitted with magical holographic sights but I'd advise you to learn to use the iron sights, there are times and places where the



magic will stop working. Best to know what you're doing when that happens."

"Why's the front part white?"

"The front bead is made out of warthog ivory, won't tarnish like elephant and it's nice and visible after it gets dark." What followed was a quick but detailed lesson on how to aim, fire, and maintain the rifles that Harry had just bought. "Well, that's all I can do. Good luck lad."

"Thank you," Harry said politely. "If I don't see you again, well . . . it's been fun."

"Likewise kid," the shopkeeper sighed.

"One stop before I go," Harry sighed. "This is it."

The cobbler looked up when Harry entered. "Good timing, just got these things finished."

"Great," Harry said. "I was hoping to get started soon." Harry slipped off Dudley's old cast off sneakers and slipped into the most comfortable pair of boots he'd ever had.

"You're going to want to break these in before you go into the bush," the cobbler advised. "These are made to fit your feet but they still need a bit of time before they'll be perfect."

"They feel perfect right now," Harry groaned. "I'm gonna have to get another pair of these when I get back." With those parting words, Harry activated his portkey and disappeared.

|||||||

"There," Dumbledore said with a satisfied smile as he secured Hedwig in one of the larger cages. "Now, to inform Harry." He wrote out a quick note and handed it to one of the school owls. "Just drop it on his bed, no need to wait for a reply."

The owl hooted in agreement and took off to deliver Dumbledore's message.

|||||||

The portkey dropped Harry off on a train platform next to what looked a lot like a worn out and rusted version of the Hogwarts Express.

"Pardon me," a voice said from Harry's right. "But could you spare a few knuts for a wizard down on his luck?"

"Sure," Harry agreed. "Here."

"You coming?" The conductor asked. "A week before we're back here so make up your mind quickly."

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "I guess."

"New at the game then?"

"Does it show that much?"

"Like it's written on your face," the conductor laughed. "Best advice I can give you is to turn back and forget about all this nonsense."

"What about the second best?"

"Find a good tracker and a good skinner," the conductor replied quickly. "And make out your will before you go into the bush. Keeps everything nice and tidy."

"Why a train?" Harry asked after he'd bought his ticket. "Why didn't the portkey take me further in?"

"Has to do with the limits of the magic," the conductor explained. "It took you to the station where the train was and it would have taken you to one of the next three stations if we were there. Further then that and you're past the effective range that a portkey can travel."

"Oh."

"Lots of other things a train can do better than a portkey too," he continued. "Like carry cargo. We make a six day circuit from the coast to the heart of Africa and back. Taking bulk cargo in and all sorts of things back out. It's a rich land lad," he said with a grin. "Place where a man can make his fortune if he keeps his wits. Gold, diamonds, and a hundred different ingredients for potions. They're all waiting for someone to pick them up and bring them out."

"Gold? Diamonds?"

"Be sure to buy an automatic pan," the conductor advised. "Just drop it off on the side of a stream and check it in the morning."

"Automatic pan?"

"A gold pan that's charmed a bit," he laughed. "It'll sift through the gravel and collect any precious stones and metals. Probably won't get anything but you never know."

"Thanks," Harry said as the conductor walked off to continue his rounds. With a sigh of disgust, he reached into his new rucksack and pulled out one of the books he'd purchased. "Well . . . nothing to do but study I guess, 'The Art of Travel' by Francis Galton huh? Well, I guess this is as good a place to start as any."

Over the next couple days, Harry passed the time by flipping through his books and memorising everything that seemed to be important . . . and a good deal of what seemed on the surface to be useless information. As the conductor had cautioned, the only kind of useless information in the bush was the kind you didn't have. Who knew when the mating habits of a toffee nosed honey badger might come in handy, could save your life.

IIIIIIII

"What is it Molly?" Dumbledore asked kindly.

"Professor . . ." Molly began with a worried frown. "It's Harry, I know you told us not to write but I sent him a care package and Pig . . . Ron's owl, returned with it."

"Not to worry Molly," Dumbledore said in what he privately termed his 'all knowing' voice. "I'm sure young Harry just needs a bit of time to himself. They all go through an independent stage at his age and after what happened in the Department, it's not surprising that he needs a bit of time to himself. Pass the word on to Ron and Hermione not to try contacting Harry until further notice."

"I . . . yes Headmaster," Molly agreed reluctantly.

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After a few days, the train rolled to a stop in the middle of a muddy collection of tin roofed shacks. "Last stop," the conductor called out. "Less you've grown some sense and want to book passage back to the coast?"

"This place looks just fine," Harry said with a grin. "Thanks for all the help, I enjoyed the conversations we had."

"Do yourself a favor and make your first stop the bar," the conductor sighed. If he couldn't stop the young fool then maybe he could help him.

"I don't drink."

"Best place to get a bit of informaiton, doesn't matter if you drink or not."

"Oh . . . thanks."

"Don't mention it kid, good bye and good luck."

"Better good then lucky," Harry called over his shoulder. "Luck runs out."

"That it does lad," he agreed under his breath. "That it does."

Harry couldn't miss the saloon, it was the largest of the four buildings in town and the only one that had a sign. He pushed through the bat wing doors and made the last step that took him from a normal life and into a life of adventure.

"TO PETE," one of the men at the bar said loudly. "Another good man killed by the dead, he really should have known better."

"TO PETE," the rest of the bar chorused.

"Killed by the dead?" Harry muttered.

"It's the dead ones that'll kill you lad," one of the men explained. "Bullets are cheap enough to use an extra to make sure."

"You shoot something it goes down," another man took pity on Harry. "You think it's dead and you get to work, it wakes up in a bad mood and that's all she wrote. Same as the way empty guns kill more people than the loaded ones. Understand?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "I understand."

"Good, just roll into town?"

"With the last train."

"Be sure to sign the guest book then," he said with a grin. "So we know who to toast when it's your turn."

"Uh." Harry eyed the book for a few seconds.

"Don't want to put down your real name?" The bartender asked sympathetically. "Don't worry, just put whatever you like then. Magic'll know the truth, the ink turns black when you die to let us know to toast you. Better than most funerals in my opinion." Harry looked at the book for a few moments before it came to him. "H. Evans?" The man asked.

"Close enough," Harry agreed. "You know where I can hire a good tracker?"

"Usually a couple hanging around the general store, that's the third building on the left. Second is the chapel slash morgue, they're the best when it comes to scraping up what's left after the bush has had its way with a man and making it presentable enough to have a closed casket funeral."

"And the first?"

"You might call that one a hotel," he said with a grin. "But only if you want rooms by the hour. Want something a bit longer term then I've got a couple up stairs."

"That's ok," Harry replied. "I'd really rather get into the bush as soon as possible."

"Good luck then lad and don't forget to enjoy yourself."

"I won't," Harry assured him.

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Dumbledore popped a lemon drop into his mouth as he watched a small device spin so fast that it began to melt from the friction.

"I wonder what that means?" He mused to himself. "I'm sure it's not important."

|||||

"Anyone here a good tracker?" Harry asked as he stepped into the store.

"I da best traka in the bush baas," a man replied.

"You're hired," Harry said after no one came forward to contest the man's claim. "See if you can round up a couple of skinnners and porters."

"Yes baas."

"You need anything from me?" The east Indian behind the counter asked with a neutral look on his face.

"You stock six hundred nitro express cartridges?"

"No."

"Start," Harry advised. "I'll take a box of three seventy five and another of four sixteen."

"Anything else?"

"Half dozen cans of peaches," Harry said after a moment of thought. "And an automatic pan."

"Care for a bit of advice?"

"Hmmm?"

"Buy a few pounds of tobacco, your men will expect it as part of their pay."

"Fine," Harry agreed. "Toss in anything else you think I might need . . . and be prepared to explain exactly why I need it in excruciating detail."

|||||

Hedwig coughed up another owl pellet and glared at the lock on the cage in disgust. There she was, the whole room to herself and the summer off and she gets thrown into the clink. Not this owl, she was going to escape and she was going to enjoy her time off.

The owl turned her head three hundred and sixty degrees to make sure the coast was clear before jumping down to the floor of her cage and scratching it with her claws. She would have her vacation and she would enjoy it.

|||||

Harry had his men set up camp on a water hole a few miles outside the small town and motioned for his tracker to join him.

"Wat's up baas?"

"We're just going to have a look around," Harry explained. "Nothing big."

"Right baas," the man agreed.

"Let's go," Harry said. "Tell me if you see any tracks."

"Sho ting baas."

Harry followed the man about three kilometers in a large spiral before either of them noticed anything of interest.

"Step back a bit," Harry ordered. "There's a snake up ahead."

"You do'wanna go near dat snake baas," the tracker advised. "Mamba, bad news."

"I'll be fine," Harry said over his shoulder. "Now then," he hissed. "I'm wondering if you can help me?" By way of reply, the snake lunged and buried its fangs in Harry's outstretched hand. "You wanna play it like that?" Harry asked. "Ok, we can play it like that."

The tracker just turned in disgust, one bloody day and he already had to find a new job. He walked off ignoring the mutterings of the dead man behind him, no sense waiting around to watch the end when he could be in town hustling work.

|||||

Alerted by some strange survival instinct, Hedwig hopped off the floor of the cage and back onto her perch just before Dumbledore entered.

"What are you doing?" Dumbledore demanded. "You aren't trying to escape are you? There is no escape from Luft cage thirteen . . . no one has ever escaped the Iron Headmaster."

"The Iron Headmaster?" A voice filled with mirth asked. "Have you been drinking Albus?"

"It's just . . . Minerva, did you have those end of year reports ready yet?"

"I've still got three weeks before they're do . . . Iron Headmaster."

"Yes . . . well . . . carry on then."

|||||



"New guy . . . Evans? Well, his tracker just came in. Said he was bitten by a ten step."

"Shame about that, didn't even last a day in the bush."

"His name hasn't turned black yet," the bartender interjected. "Think you might be a bit premature?"

Harry walked in a few hours later with an annoyed expression on his face. "Any of you know where I can hire a new tracker?" He growled. "One who won't run away screaming from a little snake?"

"He said you got bit mate," one of the men laughed.

"I did," Harry agreed. "By this thing, book says it's fangs are worth a pretty penny and that the rest of it doesn't go cheap either."

"That thing bit you?" One of the men gasped. "And you survived?"

"This lil thing?" Harry asked with a grin. "Maybe I'll tell you what it's like to get bitten by a big snake sometime. Now, about finding a tracker?"

"Village three days walk north of here is supposed to have some good ones for hire," the bartender said with a yawn. As a bartender, it was against union regulation to show any hint of surprise by anything. "You want me to pass the snake along to a dealer for you?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "Figure the money is an advance on my tab."

"Sure thing."

"You know what this means?" One of the men asked after Harry had left.

"That it looks like the new guy is going to live long enough to get a nickname?"

"No that I've just thought of the perfect nickname," his friend corrected. "To Snakebite, meanest bastard to arrive in the last week or so."

"To Snakebite," his friend agreed. "So long as you've got this round."

AN: Like I said before, blame Capstick and a few others for this idea. Lot's of the details were mined from their books, I've never so much as set foot in Africa. The Art of Travel by Francis Galton is a real book that was written in the 1800s on how to be an Explorer, you can find it online as a PDF and it's worth a look. People have asked what part of Africa this is, truth is that it's an amalgam of the Africa described by two dozen or so authors. What's more, most of those descriptions were between two hundred and twenty years old so the details you read aren't as they are now, they're as they were according to Bell and a few of the other old timers. I've got another fourteen pages of notes for this one so don't be surprised if I put up at least one more chapter, was trying not to get another project and with luck I'll succeed.

What fic of mine is complete with out the list of people who made it possible? Well, it starts with Ed Becerra, Dave Gerecke, meteoricshipyards, ausfinbar, ubereng

Omake By: Fenris

The tall, heavily scarred Masai gazed out into the dark, his grip shifting slightly on the lion spear that was as much an extension of his body as it was a weapon. "A stranger approaches, Effendi," he said quietly, carefully not turning his gaze towards the campfire where it        sigh        affect        his        night        vision. "I heard him, Donyo," Harry replied quietly. Actually the outer wards had tripped fifteen minutes ago, but some of the boys in his party were nervous enough about packing for 'Bwana Witch Doctor' without rubbing their noses in it.

A few minutes later a voice called out of the darkness, pitched to carry into the camp without announcing the person's presence to the whole Veldt. "Hello the camp! Any chance of a cup of coffee for a weary traveller?"

"Come ahead if you're friendly, we've food and drink to share," Harry replied. "If you're unfriendly, well, come ahead anyway. We have shovels as well."

The voice chuckled and a few seconds later a travel-stained figure materialized out of the dark, making for the gap in the boma two of the boys quickly opened, closing it behind the newcomer as soon as he'd passed through.

Harry ran a practiced eye over the arrival and quickly drew several conclusions. One, whatever the man did, he was reasonably competent at it; no incompetent survived in the Bush long enough for their gear to achieve that comfortable, well-broken-in look unless they were competent. Two, the man was either very deadly or very lucky. Trekking across the Veldt by oneself was risky bordering on suicidal.

Doing so armed with nothing more than a .455 Webley and a drover's bull whip pushed the odds from suicidal and towards insane, but there was always the chance that the lack of a proper rifle was a recent occurrence, or that the visitor had some more esoteric means of self-defense. He didn't feel like a wizard, but there were some interesting tingles emanating from the man's backpack and jacket pockets. Harry couldn't be certain, but he thought he recognized some of the sensations as similar to a few items in Bill Weasley's collection, trophies from his-curse-breaking and tomb-robbing days.

All this passed through Harry's mind in the few seconds it took the stranger to reach the fire. He had a good face under the battered fedora, the lines marking his feature as much from laughter as from facing the elements. His brown leather jacket had seen better days, but the repairs he could see had been lovingly done, another good sign of the man's character.

Handing over a cup of coffee as soon as his guest reached the table, Harry waved towards the chair opposite him. "Food first, talk after. Ishmael is a competent camp cook, but third-day gazelle stew is not improved by letting it get cold. We can talk afterwards."

After a brief pause where hunger warred with manners, hunger won out. Several helpings disappeared in short order, along with a pot and a half of coffee. Meanwhile Harry extended his senses and tried to get a feel for what his visitor was carrying. Definitely tomb items,

though none of the really vicious curses seemed to be present. A couple were even emanating as strong protective talismans.

One particularly nasty item gave Harry pause. It wasn't a Horcrux, for which Harry was eternally grateful, but it was definitely sentient, if dormant.

This left Harry in a bit of a quandary. On the one hand he really was trying to stay out of the Saving People business; if some idiot wanted to haul around a possessed artifact that stood a fair chance of sucking out his brain through his left nostril, that was no one's business but his own. The problem was that, hauling it around as he was there was no telling where the object would eventually come to rest, or who might be threatened by it. Like it or not, it looked like he was going to have to stick his nose in.

Still, there was no reason to jump directly to the unpleasantness. Pouring and setting a small brandy in front of his guest before taking one for himself, Harry resumed his seat. "Well, now that the furnaces have been stoked and the bunkers refilled, I'd take it that introductions are in order. You are...?"

His guest smiled and raised his glass. "Indiana Jones, Fellow of Archaeology at Arkham University, in Massachusetts."

Harry quirked an eyebrow, considering the obviously looted items squirreled away in his guest's pack.

Not that he had any moral high ground when it came right down to it, Harry thought as he considered the adult Nundu several of his boys were stripping of its hide while two journeyman potion brewers waited to harvest rest of the beast's magical components. "Sankebite Potter," Harry replied, offering his hand for a firm grip and shake which Professor Jones provided. "Cryptozoologist," he added as the handshake ended.

Omake for Transfer by migeleelrubio:

"Mom?" Gabrielle looked at her mother in hope.

Her mother knew what was coming. "No, you can't go to Hogwarts!"

"But I don't want to go to Hogwarts."

"You don't?" That was a surprise.

"Harry doesn't go there any more, neither does most of the school.

"He doesn't ... Most of the school?"

"Yes, they go to some other school now, look here."

"287 transfer to another school?" To say that a half Veela was hard to surprise was easy, but then again she was very surprised was an understatement. She remembered how she had told her younger daughter "Any school but Hogwwarts, and that is final." It was time to pay up.

"I'll handle it."

"Thank you so much, and don't forget, you don't need the make-up."

At least she got a hug out of it.

And another

This obviously takes place after 5th year so here is an omake:

Gabrielle Delacour was lonely, sure she was in her first year of school but there were certain problems with being part Veela and all that. At least the owl landing in front of her plate distracted her nicely. "Thank you Jaque"

|||||||

Everyone in the hall stared as the girls jumped to her feet and ran from the hall screaming about make-up and making her hair.

Everyone wondered if that was a Veela thing.

|||||||

Madame Maxime sighed, she should have seen that coming. and she supposed that opening the north tower wasn't enough, at least two of the teachers from Hogwarts were coming as well.

|||||

Fifteen minutes later Gabrielle was back and receiving far more stares than usually.

Two minutes later Madame Maxime called to order. "I have an announcement to make. As of today we have about 361 new students who transferred from Hogwarts."

She politely ignored the squeal from Gabrielle.

"Please come in."

As the Doors to the Hall opened several new tables appeared. At the head Harry Potter entered with a large entourage. With those entering the school could be called the largest Institute of Magical Learning in the World.

"Harry!"

|||||

It had taken half an hour to convince him to be the one to lead. But as he was the one who triggered it was decided that he was supposed to be the leader.

Just a few moments after entering the leader got knocked down but a small girl with blonde hair. "Harry!" she squealed again smiling down at him from her position on his chest.

Harry blinked, cute looking young girl knowing him, Ron drooling. That meant Veela, young Veela meant Gabrielle.

"Hello to you too Gabrielle." he smiled at her.

"You speak French." The girl was absolutely delighted.

"Hermione found an obscure spell that allowed to transfer languages."

The Hogwarts crew was sniggering.

"Gabrielle, please let Harry go, we need to make introductions." Hermione requested.

At the pouting look Luna decided to speak up. "You will have plenty time to seduce him later, we are still working on a schedule."

After a few moments Gabrielle was wrapped around Harry's arm and they got introduced to the school.

Omake: The Seduction of Luna Lovegood

"Professor McGonagall, may I speak with you for a few minutes?" Luna asked.

"You may Ms. Lovegood," Minerva replied.

"Then can I? I don't have a mummy any longer and I needed some womanly advice."

"Have a seat," Minerva sighed. Why in the nine hells did Lovegood have to come to her for help? "What do you need?"

"Well," Luna began. "I was hoping that you could give me an idea of how I could get Harry to notice me."

"Is that all," Minerva giggled. It was nice to see the Lovegood girl wasn't so odd after all.

"Uh huh," Luna agreed. "I just want him to corner me in an empty classroom, grab me roughly, and tell me that I'm his woman."

"Urk." Or not.

"Then he'll break me to his will," Luna continued. "At first I'll try to resist but he'll be too strong for me and so it will go until finally, out of breath I'll accept him as my one true master."

"I see, um I . . ."

"And then after he's sure of my loyalty," Luna giggled. "Harry will send me out to gather more girls to sate his dark lusts, one by one I'll lure my friends to meet their fate." Luna's knees rubbed together. "They'll be defiant at first, but Harry will order me to break them."

"That's very interesting but . . ."

"In the end, Harry will take them over and over but he'll never be satisfied. He'll keep sending me out until all the attractive girls are his. Ohhh it will be so romantic."

"I . . . if you'll excuse me Ms. Lovegood, I have some things I need to discuss with my coworkers."

"Ok," Luna chirped. She was ever so happy that Professor McGonagall was going to go get a second opinion to help her win Harry's heart, such a dedicated educator.

Omake: Cousins

"Hello Uncle Lucius."

Lucius groped for his wand and found it missing. "Who's there."

"It's me . . . your niece, you only had one sister so it shouldn't be too hard to figure out who I am."

"L . . . Lanna?" He ventured. "Lum?"

"Luna," she said happily. "Don't worry, you won't forget my name again after tonight."

"What are you planning to do . . . Luna?" Lucius asked in an oily tone, it wouldn't be too hard to charm the little bitch and after he'd gotten his wand back . . .

"I'm planning to kill you uncle Lucius," Luna replied. "I'm afraid that you've been misusing the Malfoy fortune. Grandfather always said that Malfoys bow to no one, but you've been on your knees before



Vime . . . Volemart?" She finished uncertainly. "Drat, I knew I should have looked up that silly name he calls himself before coming here. No matter, you've brought nothing but shame and ruin to the Malfoy line and it's long past time that you were pruned."

"My son will . . ."

"Be disowned," Luna said cheerfully. "Harry's the new head of family Black and without you to contest it, your marriage to Narcissa will be annulled and she will be cast out of the family. Your . . . offspring will be without a name and without a fortune, sure is lucky that he has his skills to fall back on isn't it?"

"You won't get away with this bitch," Lucius hissed. "The Dark Lord will . . ."

"But I already have uncle Lucius," Luna said with a serene smile. "You should be feeling a sharp pain in your chest right about . . . now. I may be the sole heir to the Malfoy fortune but even if they suspect something, they'll never suspect me. I'm Loony Lovegood, the girl that has trouble tying her own shoes. I could certainly never murder someone."

AN: Don't believe I've ever seen a ruthless Luna before and since she has that blond hair . . .

Disclaimer: Bit darker then I usually write.

## Debts Must be Paid

"Could you give this to Professor Dumbledore before you return to Harry?" Hermione asked.

Hedwig's head bobbed in agreement and Hermione tied the note to the owl's leg.

"Thanks girl," Hermione said with a smile.

Hedwig hopped to the edge of Hermione's desk and took off, ignoring the girl's instructions she immediately flew back to her person. She'd agreed that she could deliver the note to the old wizard, she'd never agreed that she would. The nerve of that girl, thinking she could command Harry's owl. Hedwig hooted at the thought.

"Hey girl," Harry said when she returned. "Want another owl treat?"

Hedwig hooted in excitement as she plucked the morsel from between his fingers before extending her leg to give him the message.

"What's this?" He said as he examined the unmarked envelope. "No matter." His expression turned to one of shock and confusion into one of rage as he scanned the note. "Did she ask you to deliver this to Dumbledore?"

Hedwig bobbed her head.

"Good job girl," Harry said. "Be sure to bring me any more of these things before you deliver them." Harry carefully resealed the envelope and affixed it to his owl's leg. "Do you think you could deliver it to Dumbledore now or would you rather rest a bit more?"

In response, Hedwig took off to follow her instructions.

Hedwig was flying toward the owl access window to the Headmaster's office when she saw the owl she despised most in the world, Pig the Pest as he was known throughout the Hogwarts Owlery. She noticed he was carrying a letter and the writing on the

outside was in the scrawl of that red-headed Human Dustbin (she had seen his eating habits) and it was addressed to the Goat Man.

Hedwig hurried her flight and dropped of the missive from the Beaver Girl and flew back out and rested on the ledge outside the access window. As Pig approached she switched off the part of her brain that wanted to be sick at the sight of him and hooted softly, distracting Pig from his mission.

With a few soft hoots she informed Pig of where there were some particularly fat juicy insect larvae and offered to complete his delivery for him. Pig being as big a food fanatic as Ron quickly agreed and dropped the letter. This action did nothing to enhance her opinion of him, no owl worth their flight feathers would give up letter for the sake of food.

As Pig flew off she congratulated herself on her cunning and flew off to let her human read what the Human Dustbin was writing to the Goat Man, she was sure it would be worth a few extra Owl Treats, now if only she could get another owl to help...

Harry was indeed pleased by her initiative and he was quick to reward his owl with a few extra treats.

"Good job girl," he said as he stroked her feathers. "Do you think you could deliver it without letting the Headmaster see you?"

"Hoot," she agreed as she took off.

"I'm gonna need to make a short shopping trip," Harry mused to himself. Harry threw on his invisibility cloak and slipped out of the house and past his invisible guards. Marveling at how easy everything was, Harry summoned the Knight Bus and paid his fare to Diagon.

IIIIIIII

Dumbledore arrived in his office to find two reports from the junior Order he'd assigned to watch Harry and quickly read through them.

"Ms. Granger is as through as always," he muttered to himself. "And Mr. Weasley's contains as many spelling and grammar errors as usual. Perhaps I should look into instituting a remedial writing class?" Spending a few more moments on the the thought, he reluctantly dismissed it. Everything would have to wait until the end of the war. Until that happened, he had no time to waste on finding ways to give the students a good education.

While he deeply regretted the need to keep such a close watch on Harry, he forced himself to put aside his distaste . . . it was for the greater good after all.

|||||

After Harry visited Gringotts, he visited bookshops in both Diagon and Knockturn in hopes that one of his many purchases might hold the information needed to resolve one of his problems.

After completing his shopping trip, Harry made haste to return to his cell before his disappearing act was noticed.

|||||

"Arthur?" Molly began.

"What is it dear?"

"Can you think of any more reasons we could give Professor Dumbledore to let us take Harry again this summer?"

"What do you have written so far?"

"Just that it'll allow us to keep a closer eye on him," Molly sighed. "And that it would give him a chance to have a happier summer."

"Note that . . . that we could help him learn more about the magical world," Aurthur said slowly.

"That's right," Molly agreed. "Poor boy doesn't seem to know anything about his heritage."

|||||

Meanwhile, Harry was sitting in his room making an unsuccessful attempt to research the books that he'd purchased.

"Damn it," Harry cursed. There was no sense denying it, while they were filled with useful information reading books wasn't exactly one of his strengths. "If only I could still rely on Hermione," he grouched. "I could have her distill everything and tell me." His eyes widened in shock and a sly grin bloomed on his face. "Why not," he asked himself. "It's for the greater good after all . . . and I will be giving her a choice." His mind made up, he spent a few minutes going through his pile of books until he found the one he was looking for.

|||||

Ron put the finishing touches on his report with a smile. Sometimes he couldn't believe how lucky he was that Dumbledore had chosen him to look after Harry, a few letters, a meeting once every now and then, and that was it. It was easy and the rewards were more than worth it, a bit of help with his grades, a Prefect's badge, and a few Galleons to spend on Hogsmeade weekends. Yup, agreeing to keep an eye on Harry for the Headmaster was the best thing he ever did and the best part about it was that it was all for Harry's own good.

Ron sealed up the letter and tied it to the leg of his owl, there wasn't much information in it. Just a summery of Harry's latest letter and a few suggestions on how Harry should be handled over the next year, nothing important.

|||||

"You know, I found something interesting about you."

The voice woke Hermione from a sound sleep and her hand shot towards her wand. "Who's there?" She demanded.

"It's me," the voice said. "Your . . . friend . . . and I found something interesting about you."

"Harry? What is it?" She asked nervously, she couldn't find her wand and she was acutely aware that she was helpless. This wouldn't normally be a problem, normally she'd be the first to tell you that Harry was harmless . . . that she'd be safe with him. But something about his manner was . . . odd.

"I learned that you've been telling Dumbledore about me," Harry said calmly. "That you've betrayed me."

"But he's Dumbledore," Hermione protested weakly. "He just wants what's best for you."

"Now now Hermione," Harry mocked. "You know better than that, care to try again?"

"He said it was for the greater good," Hermione sobbed. "He said it would all be for the best."

"You really think that it's ok to ruin someone's life because of the greater good?" Harry asked calmly, much too calmly. "To make choices for them, to enslave them, to make them your tool for the greater good."

"I'm sorry Harry," Hermione wailed. "So sorry."

"That may be, but you have yet to answer the question."

"He said it was for the best."

"Should I take that as a yes then?"

"Yes," Hermione whispered. She hated herself for what she'd done, hated herself for lacking the courage to admit the nature of her crime in the months before the confrontation, and hated herself even more for ruining her friendship with 'the-boy-who-lived.'

"Wonderful," Harry said with a smile. "I knew I could count on you of all people to look at things clinically. If your goal is the greater good then your means do not matter, they justify the ends do they not?"

"I'm sorry," she chanted. Her face was in her hands so she could avoid looking at those betrayed green eyes. "Sorry sorry sorry."

"Don't be sorry," Harry said gently. "You provided me with the push I needed to do what was necessary."

"What are you going to do?" Hermione asked fearfully.

"I'm going to serve the greater good," Harry said vaguely. "Do you remember our first year? When Ron and I saved you from the troll?"

"Yes," Hermione agreed. She felt sick for betraying the boy who had saved her life. "I do."

"Excellent, then tell me; do you think you would have survived if we had not intervened?"

"No." Hermione drooped even more. "I don't."

"Then you won't contest the fact that you owe me a life debt," Harry said grandly.

"You and Ron," Hermione said. The girl was miserable, flinching at every word that came out of her former friend's mouth.

"Surprised you don't know this one," Harry's voice took on a lecturing tone. "As you were saved as a result of my actions and as Ron was there at my suggestion, your life debt belongs to me and me alone. That leaves out the fact that you were in danger as a direct result of Ron's actions which would have precluded you from owing him a life debt anyway. Do you understand?"

"Yes Harry, I understand."

"Good, very good. Can you tell me what I can demand of you because of the debt you owe me?"

"Anything," Hermione said. "Any one act, even if it would result in my death." The girl's voice calmed, she had begun to accept her fate.

"Correct," Harry said proudly, as if he were a teacher shining praise on a particularly bright student. "But don't worry, I don't plan to ask for anything that would harm you."

"You don't?" She asked with growing hope.

"Of course not," Harry said quickly. "I am your friend after all, even if you did treat that friendship . . . well, we've already gone over that."

"Yes Harry," she said in a subdued tone.

"All I require is that you assist me in a ritual," Harry explained. "One that will not result in your death or in any physical harm. Do you understand?"

"Yes."

"Good," Harry said firmly. "Read this, tell me when you've mastered your part."

Hermione spent several minutes reading over the paper before recoiling in horror. "Harry . . . but this . . ."

"Will make you my slave yes," Harry agreed coldly. "Don't worry, it's for the greater good after all."

"But . . ."

"Shoe's a bit different when it's on the other foot?" He gave a cold cruel laugh. "You should have thought of that before, now read."

|||||||

Far away, Dumbledore frowned as one of the devices on his desk began chirping. "That's odd," the old wizard said to himself. "I wonder what that means?" He pulled a thick book out of his shelf and began flipping through it. "Nothing . . . well, I suppose it could be malfunctioning?" He mused. "I'm sure it's nothing important."

|||||||



"Listen up," Harry said after the ritual was completed. "I have several things I need you to do."

"Yes master," Hermione agreed in a subdued tone.

"You don't have to call me master," Harry said. "Unless it's to annoy me, if that is the case then you are not to do it in public only when the two of us are alone and can't be overheard."

"Yes master."

"First, I need you to find a way to get me out from under Dumbledore's thumb."

"Since you've passed your OWL exams, you have the option of leaving school. If you leave school then you are automatically emancipated."

"Who knows about this?"

"Most everyone," Hermione said dully. "We did our best to keep it from you."

"I see . . . in that case the two of us are leaving school."

"The two of us?" Hermione asked in horror.

"Afraid so," Harry agreed cheerfully. "Don't worry, it's for the greater good and we all know that no sacrifice is too big for the greater good."

"I . . . I understand master," Hermione had tears trickling down her face as she spoke. "What else do you require of me master?"

"How hard is it going to be to hire a couple tutors?"

"Tutors?" Hermione asked hopefully.

"Just because I'm leaving Hogwarts doesn't mean I'm going to neglect my education," Harry explained. "I do have Voldemort to deal with after all."

"You do master," Hermione replied. "Hiring a tutor or two or even five won't be a problem master . . . will I be allowed to attend lessons with you?"

"Will you be good?"

"Yes master," Hermione said quickly.

"Then yes," Harry said, "you will be permitted to have lessons with me."

"Thank you master."

"Remember," Harry said. "I'm not doing this to punish you for betraying me, I wouldn't do that."

"Then . . . why master?"

"I need a loyal researcher," Harry said with a shrug. "This was the easiest way to make you loyal. The next thing on the agenda is that you are not to tell anyone about your new status."

"As your slave?" Hermione asked with a bit of heat.

"Yes, that."

"I understand master."

"Good, not I'm going to need you to find me a long term place to stay where I won't be disturbed . . . preferably in the magical world."

"I . . . I'm not sure I could afford that master."

"I'll cover the expenses," Harry waved off her concerns. "Just tell me what you need and why."

"Anything else master?"

"I have several books that I'm going to be leaving here," Harry said. "I need you to read them and take notes on anything that might be useful for me to know."

"That's one thing I'd be happy to do," Hermione said with a sigh.

"One last thing, I'm going to need some sort of truth potion or spell. You are to either brew or acquire it for me, same deal as before just tell me what you need in terms of money."

"I can do that master."

"Good," Harry said. "Get to it then, call this number when you're finished."

"I will."

"Then I'm not going to keep you up any longer," Harry said cheerfully. "After all, you've got a busy day ahead of you tomorrow."

"Goodbye master."

"Bye Hermione," Harry said as he threw the invisibility cloak on. "Pleasant dreams."

|||||

"Does anyone have any new business?" Dumbledore asked. "Then how's the watch we have on Harry going?"

"His cousin is getting a bit . . ." Arthur paused to think of a polite term. "Large, they're talking about putting everyone on a diet again."

"A couple weeks of celery won't harm Harry overly much," Dumbledore mused. "Molly?"

"I checked the boy's things while he was in the garden," Molly said. "And there are a few books that I'm concerned about. It . . . it might be a good idea to confiscate them."

"I'll trust your judgement," Dumbledore said. "Take anything you think is inappropriate for him to have."

"Thank you Headmaster," Molly said with a satisfied smile. "Does that include items?"

"Like what?"

"His invisibility cloak has done nothing but get him into trouble," Molly explained. "And the Order could use another invisibility cloak. Not to mention those horrible things Sirius gave him."

"I don't believe we should take his cloak," Dumbledore said slowly. "I am willing to admit that I made a mistake by giving it to him, I had hoped . . . no matter. As for the rest, use your best judgement and remove anything he's not mature enough to have."

"I will Headmaster," Molly agreed.

IIIIIIII

Hermione called Harry the next day and he was at her house in a flash to receive her report.

"Well?"

"I've accomplished most of what you wanted me to master," Hermione said in a subdued tone. "Sirius left you his house so you have a place to stay in the magic world. I've gone through the books and noted several spells and potions that could be useful."

"And the last thing?" Harry asked eagerly. "A way to tell the truth?"

"There . . . there is something I've found a reference to," Hermione said nervously. "That would allow you to know when people were trying to mislead you. It . . . it wouldn't compel them to tell the truth, but it also wouldn't do anything to tip them off that you're doing it."

"Well?"

"It's a kind of charm," Hermione said reluctantly. "I think . . . I'll need a few more books to research it."

"How much time do you need?"

"Just a couple minutes . . . I think," Hermione mumbled the last part. "I think I can work out the mechanics of the spell from these descriptions."

"Get to it then."

"Yes master."

"And hurry," Harry continued. "We have a meeting we need to go to tomorrow."

"I understand master."

IIIIIIII

The Order meeting was in full swing when Dumbledore stopped speaking and became very still.

"What is it Headmaster?"

"Someone's entering the wards," Dumbledore gasped. The old wizard drew his wand and faced the door.

"It's just me," Harry announced as he walked in to find a forest's worth of wands pointed at him. "Though I do appreciate the welcome, heil Dumbledore." He drew his wand and extended his wand. "You may be seated."

The wands disappeared and several grumbling witches and wizards took their seats. Though a couple muggleborns shot worried looks at the Headmaster, the meaning behind Harry's gesture seemed to have escaped the notice of the majority of the assembled Order.

"Why have you come here Harry?" Dumbledore asked in a grandfatherly voice. "You know it's not safe to be out on your own."

"I know several things," Harry replied. "For instance, did you know that I own this house?"

"I was aware of it," Dumbledore said dryly. "I wasn't aware that you were."

"And as the owner," Harry continued. "I'm afraid that I don't like the idea of so many people here unsupervised. In the future, no one is to be here without my express permission."

"Harry," Dumbledore began.

"I also know," Harry interrupted. "How little the Order has done to combat Death Eaters. Rather, you've been spending all their time spying on me and keeping me confined to my . . . to the place I live."

"It was for the greater . . ."

"Yes yes," Harry said with a yawn. "We're all well aware you think that."

"What I don't understand is how you were," Moody growled.

"I had my spy tell me," Harry replied. "Hermione, come out here."

A very subdued Hermione came through the door and took her place behind Harry.

"What have you done?" Dumbledore said in horror.

"Nothing that wasn't for the greater good," Harry replied. "Hermione here understands that . . . don't you Hermione?"

"I understand Harry," Hermione said sadly.

"See?"

"Headmaster," Molly said. "I don't understand?"

"Harry has enslaved her," Dumbledore said slowly. "Using a very ancient ritual."

"I only did what I had to do," Harry retorted. "I needed a loyal friend and the ritual gave me one."

"No," Molly whispered in shock. "You can't."

"Can't what?" Harry asked mildly.

"You can't take Ginny," Molly begged. "It was us who betrayed you, Ginny had nothing to do with it."

"True," Harry agreed. "Though that may have been due to lack of opportunity. Don't worry Mrs. Weasley, I don't believe I would have taken Ginny even if she had betrayed me."

"Why not?"

"Be quiet Ginny," Molly hushed.

"I did what I did to Hermione to insure her loyalty," Harry explained. "And because with her affinity for research, well . . . she is far too valuable to lose. You on the other hand have nothing I need . . . no offence."

"I can cook, clean, sew, knit, and I'm doing fairly well in my classes." Ginny said quickly, "my family betrayed you and I do owe you that life debt . . . please Harry."

"You actually want me to enslave you?" Harry asked in amused shock.

"I always wanted to be yours," Ginny replied. "This way I can be."

"Done," Harry said with a smile. "We'll make everything official when we get home."

"Nooo," Molly sobbed.

"Thank you . . . master."

AN: My version of the whole Harry has slaves plot. Don't generally write this sort of stuff but the idea popped into my head. I prefer humor but sometimes other things want to be written. Basic idea is that every Dark Dumbledore (or Double D as I like to call him) cliché is true. Harry's friends are spying on him, Dumbledore put him with the Dursleys to break him, etc. Harry finds out and with the help of a few life debts and a little dark magic, strikes off on his own . . . in the name of the greater good of course. After all, what good could be greater then the one that benefits him. Thought I'd mention that it

could be argued that his defeating of Voldemort puts every wizard, witch, and magical creature in the UK in his debt. Thanks go to Tommy King for one of the above scenes.

Omake: Disturbed

The Order meeting was in full swing when Dumbledore stopped speaking and became very still.

"What is it Headmaster?"

"I feel a presence," Dumbledore droned. "One I've felt before."

"I told you we shouldn't have showed him that damn muggle movie but noooo, it'll be fun you said."

Omake: Gabrielle

"You don't owe me a life debt Gabrielle," Harry said in exasperation.

"But I do," the girl disagreed. "Tu saved me from ze lake."

"You were perfectly safe."

"But . . ." the girl paused to think, it was cute the way her nose scrunched up in concentration. "Ze murmen, zey 'ould 'ave killed mee."

"Why?"

"Um . . . zair eez a seekret war wiv ze murmen and ze Veela, so zay ould 'ave killed mee."

"Hermione?"

"I've never heard of it master," Hermione said quickly.

"But of course," Gabrielle said smugly. "It eez a seekret . . . master."

"No."

"Please?"



"Don't you think I have enough girls?"

"No master," Gabrielle said as she cuddled up to his side.

Omake: Luna

"Hello Harry," Luna said cheerfully. "Are you here to enslave me now?"

"Uh . . . no Luna, I was just dropping by to say Hello."

"Why not?" The girl asked with a pout.

"Well . . . you don't owe me a life debt and you haven't betrayed me . . . have you?"

"No but I was hoping that you wouldn't let that stop you," Luna replied. "Please? Or if you won't make me a slave then will you be my boyfriend?"

"You want to be my girlfriend?"

"Uh huh," Luna agreed.

"And you don't mind that I've got a few slaves . . . that happen to be good looking witches that would do anything I tell them?"

"Why would I?" Luna asked in confusion. "You'll share right?"

"Share?"

"When you have them do kinky things," Luna said. "I can join in can't I?"

"Uh . . . sure Luna."

"Then of course I don't mind," Luna said quickly. "I'm not sure why I would."

"Wanna go on a date then?"

"Can we go to the zoo?" Luna asked in excitement. "I love feeding the monkeys."

"Sure Luna."

"And the lion is always so happy when he eats them," Luna added as they walked out the door.

"Eats . . . the monkeys?"

"What else would he eat?"

Omake/insert for "Debts" by donelsenheimer

Hermione woke up the next morning feeling far more relaxed, warm, and ... aroused...than she should have, all things considered. It took her a few seconds to realize why.

"Dobby!" she cried, once she pulled up her comforter. "What are you doing down there?"

The House-elf crawled out from underneath the blanket, sat down on the pillow next to Hermione's head, and asked, "Were you having pleasant dreams, Mione?"

Not wanting to admit the truth, she changed answered the question with a question. "Why are you here, Dobby?"

"A good slave always help a fellow slave obey his Master."

"What?"

"Master ordered his slave to have pleasant dreams before he left. Dobby was helping Mione obey her Master."

"But...but... what do you mean?" Hermione asked. "How did you know?"

"A Master's chief slave always knows...Dobby was so happy for Mione and Master."

"But Dobby, I thought that you were a free elf?"

Dobby nodded back and forth. "I was free to decide to become Master's first slave." He then stood up on the pillow, pulled the hem of his small tunic up under his armpits and exposed a small tattoo on his inner thigh (and in the process exposing far more House-elf than Hermione would have wanted to see).

He pointed towards Potter crest that was inked into his skin and announced, "Just like Mione!"

Shocked more by what he was saying than what he was exposing, Hermione quickly ducked under the sheets for a self-inspection.

"Eep!"

After Hermione covered herself back up, she asked, "But....but... you don't call Harry Master,'...did me make you keep it a secret too?"

Dobby nodded seriously. "Master Harry told me to keep it a secret... even to himself!"

"So he doesn't know that you're his slave?"

"Master told Dobby to make him forget. But Mione mustn't tell Master... a good slave always help a fellow slave obey her Master."

AN: My idea is that House Elf magic is bestowed upon them so that they can better serve their masters. When a house elf is freed, he or she loses their magic. Harry agreed to become Dobby's master after his

second year so that Dobby could keep his magic, but didn't want to know he owned a slave...so he ordered Dobby to obliviate him of the fact.

When Hermione becomes a slave, she automatically gains these additional powers (e.g. she can now do wandless magic, knows how to cook, doesn't need to sleep much, and can apparate through wards just like House-elves do). These skills would obviously come in handy as she tries to follow her Master's orders.

Disclaimer: Not really a story per say.

Just a few loose Omake

OMAKE: Evil Detector

All eyes turned to stare at Harry Potter as he entered holding an odd device with blinking lights.

"Hmmm." The Ravenclaw table moved out of the way when he pointed it at them as did the Hufflepuffs. "Interesting."

"Harry," Dumbledore said kindly. "Would you mind telling us what you're doing?"

"I'm trying to improve security," Harry replied absently. "To that end, I've constructed an Evil Detector."

"An Evil Detector hmmm? How does it work?"

"I'll explain it later when both of us have several hours to spare," Harry said. "But let's just say I've spent the last several months constructing this in my spare time."

"Point it at Snape, Harry," Ron yelled. "Let's see how evil that bugger is."

"Well . . . that's unexpected," Harry muttered.

"What is it Harry?" Dumbledore asked intently.

"Well . . . according to this, he's not evil." Harry replied, "but Snape is a pathetic dick."

"Professor . . ." Dumbledore began.

"Sorry, Professor pathetic dick." Harry barked a short laugh. "He's not even as evil as Professor McGonagall."

"Professor McGonagall is evil?" Dumbledore asked in shock.

"Professor," Harry directed the question to his head of house, "are you or are you not planning to assign homework over the holidays?"

"Well . . . that is to say . . ."

"See, evil. Didn't say she was puppy eating evil, just a little evil."

"I see," Dumbledore said solemnly. "Why are you pointing it at me?"

"Woah," Harry gasped. "That reading's off the charts."

"What?" Dumbledore asked dumbly.

"It says here that you're worse then a puppy eater," Harry said slowly. "Even a worse then a cannibal puppy eater that supplements his diet with orphans."

"Your machine must be broken," Dumbledore said quickly. "Check it again."

Harry waved it in the direction of the Slytherin table and then at the Hufflepuff table again. "Nope everything seems to be in order." He waved at the Slytherins. "One table full of pathetic dicks, though not as pathetic as Snape . . . I mean, who keeps a grudge against people who bullied him as a child and uses that as justification to bully children that he's supposed to teach? And one table full evil behind the scenes types . . . you know, the sort of people who would form a shadow government and rule us all in secret?" The Slytherins looked pissed . . . in a pathetic sort of way, while the Hufflepuffs just smiled innocently in response to the nervous looks directed towards them.

"None the less I am not evil," Dumbledore said kindly.

"Hmmm, who here thinks it's a good idea to kidnap an orphan and leave him on the doorstep of a house filled with bigoted bastards . . . anyone?"

"It was for the greater good," Dumbledore said weakly.

"What if it's for the greater good?" Harry asked loudly. "Anyone . . . what about the Hufflepuffs, what do you guys think?"

"We're not that evil Harry," Susan admitted. "We'd raise the orphan as our own and brainwash them to our cause." Upon noticing the shocked looks directed at her Susan hastily amended her statement, "I mean if we were evil of course."

"Of course," Harry agreed with a wink. "So, looks like you're evil . . . really really evil."

"Oh god," Dumbledore sobbed. "Don't look at me."

Harry felt a profound sense of satisfaction as he watched several burly 'Healers' drag the former Headmaster out of the room and to his new room where he'd get to wear a jacket that made him hug himself all day.

"Woah," Ron said. "Who knew that Dumbledore was so evil . . . but are you sure your machine is working right Harry? I mean, I understand that the Hufflepuffs and McGonagall are evil . . . I mean, it only makes sense right?"

"I'm sensing a but," Harry said dryly.

"Well, it's just . . . are you sure Snape is just a pathetic dick? Maybe Dumbledore's evil was so evil that it was overwhelming Snape's evil . . . or maybe he's just too much of a pathetic dick and that hides his evilness?"

"This isn't an Evil Detector," Harry sighed. "It's a remote control."

"A what's it now?" Ron scratched his chin. "Does that mean Dumbledore isn't evil?"

"You know what . . . forget it, I was just kidding. Why don't you try to figure out why it didn't work right on Snape?"

"Ok Harry," Ron agreed.

"You wanna go for a . . . walk?" Susan asked in a sultry voice as she wrapped her arms around Harry's chest.

"Sure." He turned and gave her a kiss. "Thanks for backing me up there."

"You owe me," she giggled. "Do you know how hard it was to convince the others to let you reveal our shadow government?"

AN: Just a bit of fun, move along nothing to see here.

Omake: The Second Task

Goes with Omake: 'A Rather Depressing scene' in chapter 26 of 'Odd Ideas'

"He's been down there a long time," Susan said with a worried frown. "Do you think he'll be ok?"

"He's a Hufflepuff," her aunt said with an unladylike snort. "Harry'll be fine and there isn't any real danger so Hanna will be too . . . no matter what happens."

"Wait . . . oh god, look at the water."

"Blood," Amelia said in a matter of fact tone. "Wait here, I need to go find out what's happening." Amelia pushed her way to the crowds and joined Dumbledore and the Judges at the shore of the lake just in time to see a wounded merman crawl out of the lake.

The merman managed to choke out a few words to a rapidly paling Dumbledore who signaled to the healer.

"What's he saying," Amelia demanded.

"Harry," Dumbledore said sickly. "He's . . ." The old man cut off when the boy in question stepped out of the lake with his friend Hanna cradled in his arms.

"You did this to her," Harry said in an oddly calm voice.

"Harry I . . ."

"Die." Most people would say that a fourth year student would be no match for the great Albus Dumbledore . . . when that student was Harry Potter, most people would be wrong.

IIIIIIIIII

"How's Albus?" Minerva asked.

"With a bit of luck, he could regain up to sixty percent of his mobility." Pomfrey said with as much cheer as she could muster. "And he should be regaining consciousness any day now."

"Wonderful," Minerva sighed. "And Harry?"

"Calmed down after Hanna assured him that she was ok," Poppy sighed. "If it weren't for her then Albus . . ." she trailed off.

"It's nothing less than what he deserved," Sprout entered the conversation. "I told him not to go through with the task, I did everything I could to keep them from taking Hanna but Albus wouldn't listen. Even had the gall to confine me to my quarters under guard to keep me from 'interfering with the challenge on young Harry's behalf' as he put it."

"You knew what would happen?" Minerva gasped.

"I knew what would happen," Sprout agreed.

AN: Not all that good, but it's just an omake.

Mini OMAKE: The Hat, goes with the above Omake.

"Harry Potter." The hall went silent and every eye turned to watch the small boy take his seat and put the hat on his head.

"Oh . . . oh my," the Hat said. "I . . . I'm sorry lad, not many face such trials at such a young age. There's only one place I can put you after what you did and who knows perhaps you'll be able to find new friends in . . . Hufflepuff."

Mini Omake: Triwizard.



"Bad Dragon." Harry smacked the giant lizard on the nose with a rolled up newspaper. "No," he said firmly. The crowd watched in shock as the bewildered dragon shank back submissively. "You've just got to be firm with them," Harry explained as he reached up to scratch the dragon behind one of the horns.

Disclaimer: Let's see if it works this time hmmmm?

Just a Few More Omake

OMAKE: Opposites Attract used

Every jaw in the Great Hall dropped when they saw Neville Longbottom walk in with an exotic dark haired beauty on his arm. Several of the more . . . fragile students fainted when they recognised the exotic dark haired beauty as Bellatrix Lestrange, one of the three people responsible for Neville's parents' . . . condition.

"Uh . . . hey Neville," Harry said slowly. "How are you doing today?"

"Wonnrrrrnderful," Neville said with a smug grin. "Spent the last few hours doing some rather . . . strenuous activity and now all I want is a nice big breakfast to get my energy back."

"He means shagging," Bella said helpfully.

"Uh . . . you do realise that you're with Bellatrix Lestrange right?"

"Sure do," Neville agreed. "Unless that's not your name sugar tits."

"Not for much longer," Bella giggled. "I have a feeling that my soon to be ex-husband is going to suffer a horrific and painful accident."

"Looks like you were a day or so too early Harry," Neville said cheerfully. "Maybe you've got an inner eye after all."

"Uhhhh . . ." Harry attempted to share a glance with one of the other shell shocked students. "Sugar tits?"

"It's his pet name for me," Bellatrix explained. "I like to call him Mambo Jack . . . and I nicknamed his penis the staff of lordly might."

"Uh." Harry's brain fought and nearly lost a mighty battle to keep working. "So . . . how'd you two get together?"

"Well," Neville began. "There I was, I'd decided to hunt down Bella and kill her in a slow and creative manner."

"He looked so cute covered with my brother in law's blood and intestines," Bella cooed.

"And there we were," Neville continued. "Sharing blow after blow . . ."

"All the blowing was done by me later," Bella added.

"When suddenly we just started kissing," Neville said with a laugh. "One thing led to another . . ."

"And another and another and another and another."

"And now we're an item," Neville finished. "You know what they say, opposites attract."

"Riiiiight."

Neville and Bellatrix shared a quick meal, with Bella giving an impromptu lesson on how to eat a banana that was both erotic and horrific.

"Later chumps," Bella said as the two walked out of the room. "Mambo Jack and I need to find out if it's possible to break a steel reinforced bed frame by having too much sex."

"No such thing as too much," they heard Neville say as the couple disappeared down the hall.

"Oh man," Ron groaned. "What happened? Last thing I remember was getting some eggs and then . . . nothing, must have studied too hard last night. Well, lesson learned I'm not doing that again. From now on, Ron Weasley doesn't study."

AN: You know, I really don't use Neville as much as I should.

Omake: Homecoming used

"Director Bones?"

"What is it?"

"We found Malfoy," the Auror said. "It's ugly."

"How ugly?" Bones demanded.

"Here are the pictures." The Auror handed over an envelope full of photos. "They aren't pretty."

"I've been an Auror for a long time," she replied sardonically. "I've seen ugly." Susan examined the photos of her ex-classmate for several seconds before sighing. "Welcome home Harry."

"Ma'am?"

"Who else had the means and motive?" Susan asked. "And who else would do something like this?"

Omake: Sick used

"Oh god," Harry managed to blurt between dry heaves. "No."

Harry ran out of the Three Broomsticks, past several of his surprised friends, and out into the night.

"What just happened?" Hermione asked.

"What'd you do?" Susan was more direct and had her wand pointed at a smirking Fred and George Weasley. "Talk."

"We don't-"

"-know what you're talking about Susan."

"Come to think of it." Hermione's wand joined Susan's. "I read of a particularly nasty hex yesterday that I've been dieing to try out, I was going to use it on Malfoy but . . ."

"I'm not sure you can wait that long," Ginny growled. "Right Hermione?"

"My thought's exactly Ginny."

"We may have given him the idea-"

"-accidentally given him the idea."

"That Ginny was his younger sister," Fred said weakly. "And that she'd been placed with our family to keep her safe."

"As a back up."

"He didn't seem to mind that," Fred continued. "Liked the idea of having family."

"Until we mentioned that it didn't change anything about her crush," George stifled a laugh. "And that it was actually for the best since it would keep the Potter bloodline pure."

"Said it was mum's idea and that Ginny knew."

"And that we thought he had a right to know."

"He thinks I'm his sister?" Ginny asked in disgust.

"He believed something you two told him?"

"We might have-"

"-accidentally-"

"- yes accidentally."

"Forged several documents supporting what we told him."

"And pictures."

"Sworn testimony."

"Invented a magic charm that would confirm it."

"Took fake truth potion."

"That we switched out with the real potions he had with him."

"Not sure why he had that."

"Harry nicked it from his trial," Hermione said impatiently. "Why'd you go to all that trouble?"

“Wouldn't have believed us otherwise,” Fred said stubbornly.

“Harry's not an idiot like Ron.”

“What about Ron?” Ginny asked slowly.

“Hey there Gin Gin,” Ron said with a killer grin. “Turns out you're not my sister soooooo.”

AN: Yeah, well . . . I was bored.

Disclaimer: Been sick lately, you have been warned.

A Few Omake for You

Omake: The Breakup

"Hey Harry," Hermione said nervously.

"Have a seat mate," Ron said, patting the space next to him on the couch. "I . . . we have something we need to discuss with you."

"Ron and I have agreed that it would be best if we . . ."

"We're breaking up," Ron interrupted. "Sorry Hermione."

"No . . . it's ok, one of us had to say it," she sighed. "We're still going to be friends, we're just not going to date anymore."

"Ah . . . ok," Harry said, shrugging. He hadn't known that his two friends had tried dating. "Anything else you two wanted to talk about?"

Hermione and Ron shared a worried look, they'd hoped it wouldn't be this bad.

"Uh . . . you sure you're ok with this mate?" Ron asked, a worried look on his face.

"Sure . . . why?"

"Um . . . now we wouldn't dream of deciding anything as important as this without your input," Hermione began. "But we were thinking that you'd stay with me and meet with Ron thursday nights and every other weekend."

"And that we'd share Quidditch games," Ron agreed. "That ok with you mate?"

"So I'll be staying in the girl's dormitory then?" Harry asked.

"Yes," Hermione agreed. "You might have to share a bed with someone until we get you your own, Lav has volunteered hers but . . ."

"That's fine," Harry said quickly. "You don't have to get me my own bed."

"I'm glad you're handling this so maturely Harry," Hermione said with a tear in her eye. "I can't imagine how difficult this must be for you."

It was all Harry could do to keep himself from laughing. In other circumstances, he'd be a bit annoyed at the way his friends were treating him with kid gloves. But here . . . here, he was more amused than anything."

"Harry," Lavender walked up and sat next to him on the couch. "I know this must be very hard on you, is there anything I can do to help?"

"Help make me less hard?" Harry asked with a grin.

"If you like."

"I can think of a few things," Harry mused. "Why don't you show me your bed and we'll see if they're physically possible?"

"I was hoping you'd say that," Lavender purred.

Addition by Deric

"Okay, Hermione, spill," Harry stated to the nude teen he was spooning after a rough (yeah, right) evening of servicing the sixteen year old Gryffindor fifth years. "How did you get this past

McGonagall?"

"It wasn't all that difficult. Honestly!" Hermione giggled. "I couched everything in terms of a muggle divorce and child custody agreements. It's not my fault the Muggle Studies professor didn't know the



difference between a divorce and a romantic break up."

"And now you have your very own boytoy that you can pass around to your girlfriends?" Harry snapped.

"Oh, nonononono," Hermione flipped around to look directly into Harry's eyes. "Don't you ever think that.

"I know you don't like all the fame and fangirls and all the other things that come with that type of scrutiny. But there was no way to get you by yourself, without all the other boys or girls getting in

the way. I figured if you and I didn't work out together, at least you could find out if there was somebody else you could get together with out of the public eye, as it were."

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Five days later...

"How are you holding up, Harry?" Ron asked.

"During the day, it's not so hard. At night, though, it gets really hard," Harry replied, trying not to burst out laughing at the clueless redhead. "All the girls do their best to make it less hard, but as soon as it works, it just gets harder again," the double entendre flying over the head of the Weasley boy. "All the sixth years and above have tried to help, too."

"Well, as long as you're getting help. It just wasn't right for me and Hermione to be dating without letting you know about it."

Omake: Sold

"Hermione . . . is that you?" Harry's nervous voice sounded tinny through the phone.

"Harry . . . Harry what is it?" Hermione demanded. "Are you ok?"

"You know how your dad wanted to go out drinking with me yesterday?"

"He found you?" Hermione asked in shock. "Wards that keep wizards out and my dad goes right through them."

"Yeah . . . um, he said he looked up the Dursleys and found me after the third try."

"Something wizards would have never thought of," Hermione laughed. "So you went out with my dad then? Where'd you go?"

"Some local pub," Harry replied. "Your dad knew the Publican so . . ."

"You went to uncle Terry's place?" Hermione interrupted.

"Uh . . ."

"Welsh Dragon and a British Lion on the sign?" She clarified.

"Sounds like the place."

"Oh . . . so did you try the house brew?"

"Just a bit," Harry admitted. "But . . . uh . . . while we were drinking, your father . . . sort of . . . offered to sell you to me."

"He's still doing that," Hermione giggled.

"So I told him I had about two quid and he took my offer . . ."

"Wish I'd been there to see that, not many people play along."

"And Gringotts sent me a letter asking if I wanted to store you in my vault," Harry said in a rush. "It's five Galleons a month for the basic plan, a one time fee of ten if I want to keep you in stasis, and the price goes up if I want to keep you in style."

"Oh you'd better keep me in style Harry Potter," Hermione said sternly. "Harry . . . Harry you were joking weren't you?"

AN: Could be a joke that Harry set up with Hermione's dad, could be something else.

Addition by Fenris

Hermione stared at the open box, her expression frozen as Harry grew increasingly nervous. "And what, exactly, is this supposed to be?" she gritted at last through clenched teeth.

"Um, your collar?" Harry replied hesitantly. As Hermione's expression grew even more forbidding he hastily continued, "According to Grugtlank, if I don't want to keep you, um, 'en hareem' I think he

called it...well, anyway, you need to wear that to show that you're the, uh, property of the Ancient and Noble House of Potter; that'll keep any Purebloods from bothering you and risking being sanctioned by the Wizengamot." He tried a small smile, which faded quickly in the face of her continuing bad temper.

"And what else does it do, if I may be permitted to ask?" she said stonily, huffing when Harry looked at her blankly. "I can feel the magic on this, Harry, and it's much more than a simple identifying charm. So what else does it do?"

Harry tried looking anywhere but at Hermione's face, finally settling for looking at his feet while he blushed furiously. "According to the Goblins, as my concubine you're only allowed to perform...certain

activities with me." He glanced up quickly to gauge her reaction before continuing, "The collar ensures that you can't break those rules, and that anyone who tries to force you to won't survive the attempt."

"Harry James Potter," Hermione growled, her voice rising with each word, "do you mean to tell me that you want me to wear A CHASTITY BELT!?"

Addition by Iuinlothana

"Joke you say? Well, that's the thing. To be honest, Hermione, we stopped joking around the time we got the letter from Gringotts. You

see, neither of us suspected goblins to be the type to play along. Especially going such lengths to do so."

"Harry." she managed in warning tone

"So of course we went to them to clarify the situation. And apparently according to goblins we entered magically binding contract. Your father tried to argue that for a contract to be valid there has to be

not only contractual capacity but also intent to be bound by the contract but well... you know how far behind magical world is legal-wise..."

"Are you telling me that just because you played along..."

"Basically. I didn't catch all the details but from what I understood when a wizard is contracting with Muggle intent of the parties is not taken into account. It has something to do with an old law that was

supposed to enable magical merchants to use compulsion charms to sell..."

"I don't care!" Hermione cut in interrupting a historical anecdote, proving her distress "I'm not some goods you can buy or sell. I'm a person!"

"Well apparently since you are Muggleborn..."

"Don't finish the sentence... Just don't."

"Whatever you say Hermione. But it seems there is nothing we can do."

"There must be something. Just let me do some research."

IIIIIIIIII

Twelve hours later Hermione closed a book on magical law with a triumphant grin. She did it!

She ran downstairs where the two men responsible for the whole mass sat

"I've found it! I really found it!"

"You did?" Harry asked in somewhat relieved voice

"Uh huh. You see, normally in case of such contracts my agreement isn't needed. But since you are, in fact a Halfblood you'd either need to have my agreement or follow a previous agreement of a pureblood head of your family. I think it's safe to assume that such contract never took place."

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a few more than a few years earlier

"Give me another one." a man with unruly black hair called in a pub.

"Not in too much rush to go back home, are you?" he heard a voice next to him

"What can I say, I'm celebrating."

"Oh, are you?"

"Sure. My son's first tooth. Of course the fact that being here I left it to my wife to explain him that this is, in fact occasion for celebration and not for crying."

"Sounds reasonable to me. I'm Dan by the way."

"James."

"Pleased to meet you. Say, James, you say your son is going through toothing. That means he's just a bit younger than my daughter."

"Really? Maybe we should decide it's fate and agree on betrothal contract."

"Oh, as long as your son pays me she's his."

The men laughed until a third person hadn't entered the picture. A dark haired, blue eyed man shook James to get his attention.

"Paddy? What is it?"

"Oh, nothing. It's just that Lily is out for blood and said that if you don't get your sorry lower part of the back home within five minutes you're going to sleep on a couch for so long that you're going to forget ever sleeping anywhere else."

"I guess I can't refuse her if she asks so nicely. I guess I need to get going. It was nice to meet you, Dan." with that the two black haired men left the pub.

A moment later a few people close to the door could swear they heard two very mysterious popping sounds outside.

Addition by Erik

There was a commotion in the background. "Uh Hermione I'll have to call you back later" Harry said with a tone of profound relief in his voice.

"What? Harry, what's going on?" Hermione asked worriedly.

"Death Eaters are attacking. Bye." Harry hung up the phone quickly and went to deal with the smaller of the two problems facing him at the moment.

Addition by meteoricshipyards

Ron looked incredulous at Harry and the fuming Hermione.

"So, for about a galleon, if I had spoken to her father first and took him up on the joke. . . . Awww, bloody hell, Harry. You get everything."

Harry scrunched his eyes as Hermione made her feelings on the matter known.

Addition by dogbertcarroll

Mrs.Granger: So let me get this straight. You sold our daughter to her best friend, the one who's so shy and noble that he blushes when she

hugs him and won't even touch her without an engraved invitation stating her acceptance of physical contact?

Mr.Granger: (Sweating) Errr, yes?

Mrs.Granger: Brilliant! I thought I was going to have to wait until I was fifty before I could get grandkids out of those two!

OMAKE: You GOTTA Love Luna

"Harry, may I ask for a favor before we go to the Ministry?" Luna asked.

"Gonna try to talk me out of going?" Harry growled.

"Hmmm?" Luna seemed more dazed then usual. "No, I'm quite willing to march off to my death into an obvious trap at your side . . . I just . . . well . . . I don't want to die a virgin and I was hoping that you could help me solve that little issue before we go. From what I've read about boys your age it won't take long, certainly not long enough to put us at a disadvantage."

"Hwa?"

"LUNA," Hermione screamed. Luna walked over and whispered something into the blushing girl's ear. "Uh . . . I'm next," Hermione stuttered.

One by one the other girls of the DA formed a line as they grasped the odd girl's plan. After all, the best way to avoid an ambush is to not be there in the first place.

Elsewhere, Sirius looked up as he felt a strange feeling in the back of his head. "Godfather senses . . . tingling . . . arg." He clutched his now throbbing head. "MY GODSON IS SOOOOO MANLY."

In another place still, the Dark Lord was starting to get impatient. "Damn it, where is that little brat." Voldemort muttered under his breath.

"Have you tried putting another image of Black being tortured in his head master?" Peter simpered.

"Yes," he hissed. "And I got a reply; 'not now, busy . . . Sirius would understand.' Hmmm . . . CRUCIO."

Addition by Sergey Tsvetkov

An hour later...

"Lavender! Why are you here? You were bragging that you're not a virgin anymore since the start of the year!"

"Uh... You see... You know that you can lose your virginity more than one way?.."

"That's an idea!" Luna marched to the end of the line.

Harry started to wonder if the line was too long. "Nah... Sirius would tell me that such kind of a line cannot be too long."

Addition by fenriswolf001

One week later at 12 Grimauld Place:

"Potter, get that idiotic smile off your face and concentrate! Even an insufferable, incompetent glory-seeker like yourself should have learned that you will never learn Occlumency if you can't even focus your thoughts. Now, clear your mind! LEGILIMENS!"

The screams echoing down the stairs attracted the attention of the current residents of the Order's Headquarters, leading to the crowd gathered outside Harry's door. Several failed attempts at unlocking

charms led to a Floo call for the Headmaster, who quickly arrived in a swirl of mauve robes decorated with dancing pink flamingos and sporting a souvenir 'Fire Island' baseball cap.

Dumbledore's fully-powered 'Alohamora' finally broke through the Potionmaster's 'colloportus', causing the door to swing inward on a scene that warmed the hearts of most of those peering around the



doorframe. On the floor writhed the head of Slytherin House, while perched comfortably on the edge of his bed sat Harry Potter, a self-satisfied smirk lighting up his face.

Professor Dumbledore hurried to the Potions professor's side, sinking to the floor with a creak of arthritic, lumpy knees and a flaring of lilac-scented robes. Grabbing the younger man's shoulders he rolled him on to his back and gave him a shake to get his attention.

"Severus! Talk to me! Whatever is the matter?"

Professor Snape managed to open his eyes to a squint before moaning and slamming them shut again. "Headmaster," he groaned, "Potter's mind...the images...so much pink flesh...OBLIViate ME!"

Addition by Sergey Tsvetkov

Several months later, Voldemort's lair...

"Hrr... P-potter... You're good..." Voldemort croaked lying on the floor and properly bleeding from too many wounds. "When have you learnt how to fight? Who have taught you?"

"It's easy, Tom. But I doubt you could use it. You see, anyone can learn it very fast if it's necessary to defend oneself against fathers of several girls. And there are no better teachers than girls who don't want to see the father of their future children dead."

OMAKE: The Will

"If I can have your attention please," the Solicitor said loudly. "The reading is about to begin." He gave a slow look around the room. "I Sirius Orion Black being of sound mind and body would like to begin this will by making a confession, I am responsible for the near certain death of my godson. May god forgive me for I know Lily and James will not."

Everyone gasped in horror and several eyes turned to look at Harry.

"Harry dear," Molly cried as she did her best to squeeze the life out of the 'boy-who-was-about-to-die.'

"If I may continue," the Solicitor said loudly. "The story starts, as many do with the best of intentions. Harry, I know how much you hate your relatives and I know the trouble you've had with the Ministry so I resolved to solve both of those problems with a simple ritual. I made you my heir and to prevent my cousins from challenging this, I used a simple ritual to make you a member of the Black family. As my heir and my death, you are the Black. The problem is my parents, they didn't like how close James and I were in school and feared that we would do as they would, that is that we would follow pureblood traditions and join the families through a marriage. A Black male controlling the Potter family was nothing to worry about, their bigotry convinced them that blood would tell and that I was a sport . . . an anomaly and certainly not a true Black. They had hoped that it was all a phase I was going through and that I would eventually come out of it and return to the family. On the other hand, a Potter male in control of the Black family could not be tolerated, again their bigotry blinded them . . . they believed that blood would tell and the Black family would fall. It must have taken them years to figure out the spell work and I suspect that the amount of power that went in to it is what killed my parents, a wizard can not live long without their magic and the amount to make this curse work must have been astounding. Harry, all I can say is that I didn't know and that I had hoped to find a way to remove it before you came of age. I'd planed to solve it and then tell you after the danger had been averted, Dumbledore was always saying that you did not need the extra pressure and I reluctantly agreed with his sentiment . . . perhaps I was a fool but I did not wish to add to your troubles." The Solicitor looked up from the will. "It finishes with, I Sirius Black being of sound mind and body leave all of my worldly goods to my godson Harry Potter. I want you to spend it all on hookers and booze, enjoy the time you have left and forget this war, Voldemort will be defeated, there's no need for you to be part of it."

"What's the curse," Hermione demanded.

"Excuse me?" The Solicitor asked.

"What is the specifications of the curse?" Hermione growled.

"If a male of the Potter family should become Head of House Black, then he shall have no more than six months to live."

"And the escape clause?" Hermione persisted. "No curse that powerful can be cast without an escape clause," she growled. "What's the way out of this one?"

"Mr. Potter must have carnal relations with several women," the Solicitor said calmly.

"That shouldn't be . . ."

"Which must include the following," the Solicitor interrupted. "A daughter of the Weasley family . . ."

"Yes," Ginny cheered.

"Ahem, if I may continue?"

"Sorry," the grinning girl said smugly. "Go on."

"A girl who has seen a stockwart, a brilliant witch that is also a muggle born, a willing female of family Black, a metamorph, and no less than two heiresses of the great families. Impossible as you can see, while there is a daughter of the Weasley family . . . the first in several generations, it would not be possible to find any of the others. Stockwarts are mythical creatures so finding a girl who's seen one is . . ."

"I've seen one," Luna said serenely. "It had a glowing red nose."

"Will that work?" Hermione demanded.

"So long as she really believes it," the Solicitor agreed. "But it would be nearly impossible to find a muggle born witch that is also the top student at Hogwarts, not to say anything bad about them but very few overcome the handicap of coming to magic late. In fact, believe that last one to truly excel was Mr. Potter's mother Lily. Apparently the Blacks considered her a fluke and took it as given that it had and could never happen again."

"I have the top grades in my year," Hermione said in excitement. "And I'm muggle born, we might actually be able to do this."

"Be that as it may, a willing female of the Black family would be impossible, the only two that I am aware of are the Black sisters Narcissa and Bellatrix, knowing their positions I'm afraid . . ."

"I'm a Black," Tonks volunteered. "Mum got kicked out of the family but Sirius readmitted her . . . I'm also a metamorph so I guess that's two birds with one stone."

"Well . . . there is still one condition to meet. Two heiresses of the great families, I am sorry Mr. Potter but you may console yourself with the fact that your last few months will be happy."

"I'm the last of my line," Susan said firmly. "And I think Hanna has enough Hufflepuff spirit to help out here eh Hanna?"

"You know it Susan," the other girl agreed.

"I see," the Solicitor said in shock. "Congratulations Mr. Potter, you're going to live after all."

"Come on Harry," Hermione said firmly. "We need to find a hotel room and . . ."

"Stay there for no less then six months," the Solicitor interjected. "Casting the Constans Futuere charm on him every morning and each of you copulating with him no less then once a day, though it'd be safer to do it at least three times a day each in multiple positions. Knowing what I know of magic, I believe it would also be helpful to mix things up . . . I happen to have an assortment of sex manuals in my desk that I would be happy to lend you."

"Let's go girls," Ginny cheered. The group of girls grabbed Harry and marched out of the room . . . it didn't occur to anyone that Sirius had invited several people not named in his will for several weeks, and it took another two months to notice that the girls needed break the curse just happened to be present for the reading. No one thought much of it, when they put the two things together they just figured that

Sirius had done what he'd had to, Harry's safety would always be a priority for the man . . . even in death.

Six months later, a somewhat pregnant Hermione answered the door to the beach side villa the group was staying in to find the Solicitor. "Yes?"

"I was instructed by Mr. Black to give you this letter on this day," he explained. "Good day."

"Thank you," Hermione said. "Now if you'll excuse me, we're in the middle of something."

"No problem," the Solicitor said with a grin. "Good day."

"Bye," Hermione said as she slammed the door. Walking past the pregnant Tonks, and stepping over the pregnant Luna. "Harry."

"Mumph?"

"You got a letter from Sirius . . . should I open it?"

"Mes mees."

"Ok, it says . . ." Hermione looked up with a shocked look on her face. "Harry, figured you could use some cheering up. Who loves you baby, hope you've had fun."

"Mwaaa?"

"There wasn't a curse," Hermione said dully.

"You didn't know?" Luna asked happily.

"You knew it was a trick?" Hermione screamed.

"Of course I did," Luna agreed. "Why else would things be so suspiciously convenient"? Besides, only an idiot would believe that something as silly as slockwarts exist."

"Why didn't you say anything?" Hermione growled.

"Because some Harry time is better than no Harry time," Luna explained. "None of you are the type to share under normal circumstances."

"Uh . . ." Tonks said with a blush.

"Except for Tonks and myself of course," Luna amended herself. "I'm next."

AN: If you had to cheer up your godson, what would you do? Can you think of a better way? Yeah, I thought so. Lot's of fics where Sirius has some sort of odd clause in his will that doesn't pass the logic test, here's another.

Some additions to the Omake in the last chapter

Addition to Sick by twilliams1797

Hermione and Ginny were asleep in their shared room at Grimmauld place. The noises of the night were the usual, the building creaked and in the distance you could hear snoring from down the hall, closed door or not. Hermione was awakened by a change in air pressure, the simple act of opening the door made her aware of a difference. She silently checked to felt her wand was in he holster and waited, not moving,.

In the darkness she could sense a presence, and her eyes contacted Ginny's for the younger girl was facing the moonlight. Ginny gestured with her eyes, and Hermione slipped her wand out and aimed it at the intruder. A hand appeared over the 'sleeping' Ginevera and slowly fondled he breast. Her eyes widened in shock. The girl , laying on her right side, twisted and punched straight up, connecting with a jaw, and receiving an Ungh! in reply. Hermione cast a silent stunner which took the miscreant down. They turned on the lights and found a stunned Ron lying on the floor next to Ginny's bed. "Dammit Ron. how many times do we have to tell you...!!

Harry woke up the next morning and was shocked at the silence, Normally Ron snored like .. Ron. Today there resided in Ron's bed a 6 ft tall . . .

Addition to Homecoming by dogbertcarroll

The auror shrugged. "Anyone that went to school with him, particularly the girls from younger years and their families. Anyone who was forced to spend time with him. Loads of people really. If I hadn't been on duty at the time down in the cells, I would have had all three myself."

Susan nodded. "Point. Lets just say it looks familiar and leave it at that."

"Ahhh, the DA contract still covers certain things. Not that we know all that much about that contract, but we have heard a bit of rumor here and there about how far reaching that simple little contract turned out to be, thanks to who designed it and others that added their own little touch afterwards."

Addition by twilliams1797

"I have never seen anything like this, how is he still alive?"

"Im sure that there is some kind of explanation .. Magic, Maybe?"

'Never seen anyone actually talking out of their ass, and shite coming out their face.. ewww"

must have been a hex to reverse the digestive tract..

And Finally, Mini Omake Extended by Awlric Hayell : Triwzard (First Task):

The night Hagrid led Harry to see the Dragons for the first task, Instead of taking Harry all the way to the dragon pens, Hagrid had to go take care of a problem with the Blast-ended Skrewts and so left Harry on his own. Henceforth, Harry stayed a while longer and caught the tail end of a conversation Between Charlie Weasley and one of the other Dragon Tamers.

"Whoa! Down boy! That's a good boy. Here, have a treat." Charlie petted the Hungarian Horntail as he fed it some raw, bloody steaks.

"Yeesh. I can never get that one to listen to me." the other tamer said as he walked up to Charlie. "How do you do it?"

Charlie grinned. "You've just got to remember a few key traits. The Swedish Short Snout is like a cat: a playful dragon, but very keyed to movement, and curious. Welsh Greens, on the other hand, are like owls: the intelligent sort, the kind you kind talk to and feel they understand you. It helps that they aren't tempermental, but don't ever get one mad! Chinese Fireballs are like falcons: they have the sharpest eyes of the bunch, and the fastest dive speed, but are particular to fish and are easily distracted when a live one is tossed at them. But my favorites are these, the Hungarian Horntails. They are quite like dogs: loyal to a fault, protective, affectionate, and if this one ever gives you any trouble..."

The Horntail began inching towards the school, about to make a break for it.

"Hang on a second." Summoning a copy of the Daily Prophet, Charlie rolled it into a tube and whacked the Horntail on the nose. It roared. He whacked it again. "No. Bad Dragon. Stay here." It whimpered and put it's large scaly head between its foreclaws.

"Wow," The Tamer stared at Charlie. "That must have taken some training."

"Yup," Charlie nodded proudly, "but always have a flame freezing charm on, in case of...accidents."

Harry had heard enough. He had his plan for the tournament.

Later...

"Bad Dragon." Harry smacked the giant lizard on the nose with a rolled up newspaper. "No," he said firmly. The crowd watched in shock as the bewildered dragon shank back submissively. "You've just got to be firm with them," Harry explained as he reached up to scratch the dragon behind one of the horns.

AN: Hope you enjoyed and hope it tides you over until I get a chance to put out a real chapter of something.



Disclaimer: Alternate titles for this are; 'The One Who Bakes,' 'Harry Potter and The Fanatically Loyal Witches,' 'The-Boy-Who-Cooked,' and 'For the Fudge.'

## Summer With Tonky

Tonks growled as she watched Harry's fat relatives gorge themselves while Harry was left with nothing but a piece of stale toast.

"Screw Dumbledore," Tonks muttered to herself as she kicked open the door, "I can't let this continue any longer."

"Tonks?" Harry exclaimed when the woman burst into the room, her hair cycling through different shades as a show of her agitation.

"Get out of my house freak," Vernon shouted.

"Shut up," Tonks spat as her wand pointed at the large man. "One bloody word and I'll make sure you can never say another . . . just gimme an excuse you bastard."

"What's this about?" Harry asked calmly. Once you'd been attacked by a Dark Lord a couple times, ordinary things like an Auror bursting into your house and interrupting your meal barely rated a raised eyebrow.

"Eat up Harry," Tonks commanded. The tip of her wand was fixed on the Dursley family. "Take your fill and then we're going, I'm not leaving you here another second."

"It's Ok Tonks," Harry assured his friend. "Let's just go."

"You made this food didn't you?"

"Yeah."

"Then you deserve to eat it," Tonks said firmly.

"I don't want to take another thing from them," Harry said firmly. "Let's just go."

"You're sure?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "I'm sure."

Tonks waved her wand and Harry's trunk floated down to rest by the door. "Did you want anything that wasn't in your room?" Tonks asked. "I packed up everything magical in the house and everything I found in your room."

"Did you get the stuff under the loose floorboards?"

"Got it," Tonks agreed.

"Then let's get out of here," Harry said as he walked towards the door. "I don't think we'll be seeing each other again," he said to his relatives. "But if we do, I suggest you run."

"Way to go Harry," Tonks laughed after they'd left the door.

"Why'd you save me?" Harry asked bluntly.

"I'm an Auror and a Black," Tonks replied with a grin. "I didn't have a choice."

"What's that mean?"

"I'm sworn to uphold the law as an Auror and to be loyal to the family as a Black," Tonks explained. "What your relatives was doing was illegal and endangered the Head of House Black."

"Head of House Black?"

"Sirius made you his heir," Tonks said as they walked to the corner to summon the Knight Bus. "You get the house, maybe a thousand Galleons, and a spiffy gold plated ring made out of pot-metal . . .but most of the gold plate has worn off so it doesn't look as impressive as it used to."

"No strange powers?" Harry asked with a grin. "No political influence?"

"Mum says her da used to be able to belch the alphabet," Tonks said after a moment of thought. "Don't think that was a power he got from being a Black though . . . why?"

"Just wondering if there was anything to the shite that came out of Draco's mouth every time he talked about being a Malfoy."

"Nope, nothing to it."

"Speaking of shite."

"Yeah?"

"There's a reason you never anger your cook," Harry said with a smirk. "No way was I gonna eat anything I made for them."

"You mean?"

"Every day since I was seven," Harry laughed. "Always made my own meal beforehand."

"Harry."

"Yeah Tonks."

"You're the greatest."

"So where are we going?"

"Uh . . . I didn't think ahead that far," Tonks admitted with a blush. "I just got so angry seeing them that I just acted."

"I suppose I could get a room at the Cauldron," Harry mused.

"I can't let you do that," Tonks said quickly, "why don't you stay with me?"

"If it's not too much trouble . . ."

"No trouble at all," Tonks assured him. "I even have a spare room that you can use."

"If you're sure?"

"I am," Tonks said firmly. "Take my hand." Harry took the Auror's hand and they soon appeared in front of her building. "I'm on the first floor," Tonks said as they walked to her door. "Right this way."

"Ok."

"So here's the place," Tonks said as they walked into her apartment. "It's not much . . . and it's a little dirty."

"Do I smell fresh bread?"

"Uh . . . that's the dishes in the sink," Tonks admitted with a blush. "Started smelling like that a few days ago."

"Oh."

"Here's my room over here." Tonks waved at a door behind a large mound of unidentifiable objects. "And here's the spare room." She grunted with effort as she forced the door open. "It's a bit cluttered but . . ."

"It's fine," Harry said quickly. "Better than what I had at the Dursleys."

"The kitchen's through there, feel free to raid the fridge if you get hungry." Tonks frowned with concentration. "Uh . . . bathroom is that door over there, is there anything else you need?"

"Nope."

"I have to get up for work tomorrow so I hope you don't mind if I go to sleep now."

"I'll be fine."

"Ok . . . wake me if you need anything," Tonks said over her shoulder as she walked into her room.

"I will," Harry agreed. With a yawn of his own, Harry walked into the spare room and dug through a pile of laundry until he found an object resembling a bed.

Tonks awoke not with a bang, but with a groan of protest. Looking at the clock in confusion, her brain frantically attempted to find an explanation on why it was being forced to work so early. A faint creak outside her door alerted her that there were intruders about, instantly her wand appeared in her hand and she crept across the floor like a cat on the stalk.

“Free . . .” She trailed off and her eyes crossed to look at the tip of a wand, two inches from her nose.

“Tonks?” Harry asked in surprise. “Sorry, did I wake you?”

“Forgot I had someone with me,” Tonks admitted with a blush. “Nice reflexes.”

“You were tired,” Harry said modestly.

“What's that smell?” Tonks asked with a frown of confusion.

“I'm making pancakes,” Harry explained. “Had to tidy up a bit first, but I figured that you'd appreciate a hot meal.”

“A bit?” Tonks muttered in awe, her apartment was cleaner then she'd ever seen it.

“Yeah,” Harry said with an embarrassed blush. “I didn't do much, but I was afraid I wouldn't have time to get breakfast done if I did more than a quick once over.”

“Where'd you get the things to make pancakes?” Tonks asked suspiciously.

“You had a few things in your cupboards,” Harry replied. “So I made pancakes.”

“Syrup?”

“Strawberry syrup,” Harry said. “Well, mostly strawberry anyway. You had some frozen fruit in the icebox.”

"Wow." Tonks fingered her wand with ill intent, there was no way she was going to let Harry escape her clutches. He brought clean, food, and got rid of the mysterious smells. She knew not what dark magic he'd used to accomplish these feats but she'd be damned if she let anyone else know about her wonderful find.

Tonks wandered into work clutching the lunch that Harry had packed for her as if it were the most precious thing in the world. Every few seconds, her eyes would drift to the clock as it slowly ticked down the seconds until lunch . . . until she could rip open the package and gorge herself on the wonderful treats within.

"Auror Tonks," Amelia shouted across the bullpen. "My office, NOW."

"Yes boss," Tonks agreed nervously. Damn it, Harry had been using Dark Magic to get everything done. "Uh I realize that I might have set off the Dark Detectors when I came in," Tonks began as she walked into Amelia's office, "but that's because I . . . was in the interview rooms earlier and it must have rubbed off of me from them."

"What?" Amelia asked flatly.

"That's not what you called me in here for?" Tonks asked weakly.

"It isn't Auror Tonks," Amelia growled.

"Uh . . . just kidding?"

"I called you in here because I learned something from my niece Susan," Amelia said sharply. "I learned that Harry Potter's home life isn't the best and I want to know why some of my Aurors haven't done anything to make it better."

"Moody threatened his relatives," Tonks said sullenly.

"You will take me to Harry Potter's house right now and you will consider yourself under arrest until I've had a chance to inspect the home and speak with his relatives, is that understood Auror Tonks?"

"I can't," Tonks said looking at her feet.

"If this is because of some oath you made to Dumbledore," Amelia began to work up steam. "Then may I remind you that the oath you made when you were commissioned as an Auror . . ."

"It's not that boss," Tonks said quickly.

"Well then?"

"I already . . . sort of . . . took Harry home with me," Tonks said nervously. "He wasn't happy there and they treated him like garbage."

"You kidnapped Harry Potter?"

"He came willingly," Tonks said weakly.

"And you didn't inform me of this why?"

"I was planning to but . . . well . . ."

"I'm listening Auror Tonks."

"Uh . . ." Tonks reached into her pocket and pulled out a small package wrapped in wax paper. "He put this in my lunch," Tonks explained as she unwrapped the paper to reveal a large chunk of home made fudge. "Try it." Amelia broke off a piece and took an experimental sniff. With a sigh of resignation, the woman popped it into her mouth. "Boss . . . BOSS," Tonks shouted in worry after Amelia's eyes rolled back into her head. The older woman began shaking. "Boss wake up." Damn it, she should have known that the Director of Magical Law Enforcement would have a bad reaction to Dark Magic Fudge.

"Oh sweet loving god," Amelia gasped. "He made that? Did he use Dark Magic?"

"Yes and I haven't asked," Tonks said reluctantly. "I'm not sure how he managed to do it . . ."

"This was why you haven't reported what you've done to me?"

"Yes boss," Tonks said shamefully.

"Well this selfish behavior is going to end right now," Amelia said sharply. "You are going to take me to Mr. Potter this instant and we are going to have a long conversation about sharing."

"So I have to bring enough fudge for everyone next time?"

"God no, what gave you that idea?" Amelia laughed. "Then there might not be enough for us."

"Right boss," Tonks said with a sigh of relief. She couldn't go back to half frozen pizza and week old take out, she just couldn't.

IIIIIIII

"I'm home Harry," Tonks called out as she walked through the door. "And I brought a guest."

"Good afternoon Madame Bones," Harry said politely.

"Mr. Potter," Amelia replied. "What's that I smell?"

"I have some bread baking," Harry replied. "I thought fresh bread would go good with dinner."

"Is there enough for Susan and myself to join you?"

"I'd have to go shopping," Harry said thoughtfully. "But it shouldn't be any trouble to make more."

"Give Auror Tonks a list of everything you need," Amelia said instantly.

"Um . . . I'd rather go myself," Harry said with an embarrassed smile. "Tonks is great but I'm not sure she knows how to pick the best quality things."

"Quality?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "I'm afraid that the food hasn't been to my usual standards . . . take the fudge I made earlier . . ."

"You could make it better?" Amelia asked intently.



"You tried it then?" Harry asked in surprise.

"It was wonderful," Amelia purred, lost in the memory of chocolate delight.

"You don't have to say that," Harry said quickly. "My feelings won't be hurt if you tell the truth. I almost didn't include it since it was so bad, but I didn't want to waste it so . . ."

"Auror Tonks," Amelia snapped.

"Yes boss?"

"Get the Dignitary Protection unit here now," Amelia ordered. "Only the most reliable members."

"O'Banion, Rose, and Perks?"

"Add Flint to that list," Amelia said thoughtfully.

"Flint? But her family . . ."

"Is her family, I have a way of keeping her loyal." Amelia said thinking of Harry's delightful creations.

"Yes boss."

"Are they going to be joining us for dinner?" Harry asked.

"Would it be too much trouble?" Amelia asked with a worried frown.

"Not unless they eat more than my relatives," Harry mused. "I'd have to start cooking quickly if they were."

"Hurry Auror Tonks."

"I'm gone boss," Tonks said as she ran out the door.

After Tonks had left, Amelia made a slow inspection of the apartment. "Not bad," she mused. "But not secure enough to risk it either."

"Ma'am?"

"You can only use obscurity to protect something in the short term," Amelia explained. "Auror Tonks has done wonders, but I'm afraid that you won't be able to stay here for long."

"Oh," Harry said in disappointment. "I had hoped . . . I guess it doesn't matter."

"You wish to stay with Auror Tonks then?"

"Yes ma'am."

"Then I'll have her accompany us," Amelia said with a smile.

"Us ma'am?"

"People expect my house to be a fortress," Amelia explained. "And call me Amelia."

"Ok ma'am . . . I mean Amelia," he added hastily at her sharp look.

"I'm going to be assigning Tonks and several members of the Dignitary Protection Unit to your security," Amelia continued. "Officially they will be guarding my house, un-officially they will be guarding you. If you don't mind, I'd also like to have them evaluate you on Defense Against the Dark Arts. Susan scored rather high on your OWLs and she attributes that to your tutelage."

Tonks ended the conversation by walking in with a few unfamiliar women. "Got 'em all here for you boss."

"Thank you Auror Tonks," Amelia said kindly. "Harry, do you have anymore of that chocolate?"

"Just the cake I made for desert today," Harry said regretfully. "It's not much, but it's better than my attempt at making fudge."

"Could you bring it in please and then I'm afraid that I'm going to have to ask you to wait in the other room."

"I understand Madame Bones."

"I'm sorry Harry but until you become an Auror, I'm going to have to keep some things from you. Even then, I may have to because you do not have the need to know. Aside from that, didn't I tell you to call me Amelia?"

"It's fine Amelia," Harry was careful to say the woman's name. "I understand, really."

"Thank you Harry," Amelia said. The Auror section kept silent as Harry took a cake out of the icebox and placed it on the counter.

"I'll just be in the other room then."

"I'll be as quick as I can," Amelia called after him. "Auror Flint."

"Yes Madame Bones?"

"I am going to assign Auror Tonks and your section to Harry Potter's security, any objections."

"Yes Madame Bones," the woman agreed. "Auror regulations prohibit . . ."

"Why don't you try the cake first?"

With an annoyed sigh, the Auror reluctantly reached out and scraped off a bit of frosting with her finger and plopped it in her mouth. "Oooooooooohhh." Her eyes rolled up into her head and she began panting. "Oh yes . . . yes . . . YEEEESSSSSS."

"Harry made that," Amelia said smugly. "Now what were those objections?"

"As I was saying," the woman gasped. "Auror regulations strictly prohibit protecting civilians, but to hell with them. They also say we have to protect Fudge with our lives and I'll do that when hell freezes over."

The other Aurors shared a confused glance before taking their own tastes of the cake. Several minutes of uncontrollable undulation later,

they both came to the conclusion that they too would die to protect 'the-boy-who-cooked.'

"Fetch Harry Auror Tonks," Amelia ordered. "We have shopping to do."

Five minutes later, a team of determined Aurors stormed into the largest magical grocer in England.

"May I have your attention please," Auror Flint screamed as she walked into the grocer. "Put your un-purchased items on the floor and leave in an orderly manner. You will be permitted to resume shopping after this store has been inspected."

"What's the problem dear?" Molly Weasley asked as she filed past Tonks.

"Just playing it safe," Tonks whispered to her fellow Order member. "Can't say too much."

"I understand dear," Molly whispered back. "Good luck and be safe."

"Thank you Mrs. Weasley."

AN: I accidentally grew a culture of yeast in my dirty dishes a few weeks ago, kinda proud of that and I had to include it.

Omake: Voldemort attacks the Bones House

"For the fudge," the Aurors screamed as they leapt into battle. They'd die before they let the Dark Lord steal their chef . . . er, that is to say hurt Harry.

Voldemort was stunned, he had no idea that there was so much loyalty to the Minister in the Department of Magical Law Enforcement. Calling on his forces to withdraw, he left the field of battle. Amelia Bones had just dropped to the bottom of his people to kill list, Fudge on the other hand had just risen to the top. Any man who could inspire that sort of fanatic loyalty was a obstacle to the Dark Lord, and as any chinese amazon could tell you; 'Obstacles are for killing.'

### Omake: Interrogation

"Have a seat Bella," Amelia said with a grin.

"Burn in hell Auror."

"Is that any way to talk to an old classmate?" Amelia said with a grin. "Flint, Tonks, hold her down." Amelia got up and walked around the table to the struggling woman and with two fingers she pinched Bellatrix nose closed. "You can't hold your breath forever Bella," she cooed. When at last, the Death Eater opened her mouth, Amelia was ready. Seizing her chance, Amelia forced one of Harry's chocolate truffles into the evil woman's mouth.

"She's not struggling anymore boss," Tonks reported.

"I think you can let her go Aurors," Amelia said with a grin. "Now then Bella, was there something you wanted to tell me?"

"I'll do anything," Bella said with tears flowing down her face. "ANYTHING to get more of that."

"I rather thought you might say something like that," Amelia said smugly.

### Omake: Assimilation

Hermione being the daughter of two dentists had a rather low pleasure threshold when it came to sweets, that's why it was no surprise to the girls in the know when Hermione's eyes rolled into the back of her head and the girl fell to the floor moaning in ecstasy,

"Wait until she gets a bit of the good stuff," Susan said with a smirk.

"She's ours," Hanna agreed.

### Omake by Max

After Harry's mysterious disappearance from the Dursleys, Dumbledore immediately called an emergency Order meeting and announced the troubling news.

The greasy git, er- professor couldn't keep his trap shut "Obviously, the brat ran away."

Ignoring the gibe, Dumbledore turned to their resident metamorphagous, "Nympha-"

"Hey!" a now red-headed Tonks yelled.

"Ms. Tonks, you were the last one to see Harry. Do you have any idea where he might have gone?"

After some thought, the Auror responded, "Well, he might have expressed some interest in America." 'It could be true' she defended in her mind.

Dumbledore gained a distressed look and announced to the Order, "I cannot tell you all how imperative it is that we find Harry. His safety is paramount."

Tonks watched silently as their "esteemed" leader drafted amazingly complex and elaborate plans all aimed at finding Harry halfway across the world. Only when he got to her did she speak up, "Um, sorry Headmaster but I can't take any more work off without losing my job" 'Also not necessarily a lie.'

"I'm sorry to hear the Nympha- er Tonks." Dumbledore corrected at her once-again rising ire. "Then we won't take up any more of your time so you can get back to your job."

"Thanks, I have alot of work to." Tonks replies before making a quick exit and apparating away.

Tonks reappeared not at the Ministry but back at her home. She was ecstatic to see it now completely spotless AND an absolutely divine smell was coming out of her kitchen. "Hi Hon- Harry, I'm home. What's for dinner?"

Harry came out of the kitchen holding a pot of steaming food, "It's nothing much, just pasta cooked in some red wine with a couple other things thrown in."

Tonks was sure Harry had said something but she was too busy trying to figure out how Harry could have possibly made something so good from whatever crap was in what could only recently be called a kitchen.

Harry noticed that she wasn't paying attention and went ahead and served the food on the already set table.

'Since when did I have dishes?' Tonks thought as she sat down at a table she didn't recognize. 'Or a dining room table?'

As Tonks dug into the food with a gusto, Harry voiced the question that had been on his mind all day. "So, how was the meeting, did Dumbledore order me to be dragged back to the Dursleys yet?"

Any doubts in Tonks' were silenced once she tasted this gourmet quality food. Donning a look of not-quite-completely-genuine sympathy, Tonks replied "Sorry Harry, he did, and he might have told Snape to use "any means necessary."

Harry's face darkened, "I guess he figured being laid up in the hospital wing for a couple weeks will encourage me to be a good little slave and stay at Privet Drive."

"Don't worry Harry; you got me looking out for you. They're all looking for you in America."

"Really?" Harry asked with a look of glee.

"Yep, now you just need to help me set up some more wards around this place so they can track you."

"Won't the Ministry detect me using magic?"

Tonks adopted a smug grin "I know a couple tricks around that until you help me set up more permanent wards."

"So I can use magic all summer?"

Tonks nodded, "Just remember, I could get in a lot of trouble for this, so please don't leave this place without me."

Harry was quick to reassure the young woman who was helping him so much, "Don't worry I promise not to go out, I'd never do anything to get you in trouble, especially when you're helping me so much."

"Great, now since you're apparently done..."

Harry reddened and defended, "Well, I had to eat fast or not at all at the Dursleys."

Tonks' look of sympathy was now completely real and some of her previous anger returned. Of course this didn't sway her from her plans. "Don't worry about it Harry; you aren't going to be leaving here as long as I have anything to say about it"

Ever dense, Harry missed the slightly nefarious overtone. "Thanks Tonks, you're a true friend. So, you're really going to let me help with the wards?"

"Of course, between the two of us, they'll have enough power behind them to keep just about anyone out... or in." Tonks finished quietly.

This Harry did not miss; years at the Dursleys made him hypersensitive to his environment. "In?" Harry repeated.

"Nothing! Just Auror-thinking stuff." Tonks quickly replied in a seemingly innocent tone while pulling out a book with several pages marked. "Here's some of the wards I want to put up. Why don't you get

familiar with them while I lie down?"

Harry eagerly took the book and started flipping through it as Tonks walked over to her sofa with a hand on her happy stomach.

"Um Tonks, why is this one called the "Incarceration Ward?"



Having already anticipated such questions, Tonks replied without missing a beat, "Because they'll attack anyone who might try to take you out of here."

"Oh well, I guess that makes since."

Tonks just laid down and stretched out in comfort across the length of her sofa. She then turned her head to look over at the silver and green prefect badge lying on her mantle. 'Yep, I'm glad I listened to that old hat.'

A "ding" from the kitchen cut off Tonks' thoughts.

Harry responded before she could ask. "That's dessert, I hope you like creme brulee."

A couple low-powered Incendio spells later and Tonks had a new favorite dessert and under her tutelage, Harry was now helping erect the very wards that would ensure he never left without her permission.

While Tonks continued to "selflessly" help Harry, she was also reevaluating her original plan just keeping Harry as just a cook and maid. 'Hmm, he cooks, he cleans, and I can get him to do whatever I

want. Plus if what Fred and George said about that Cho girl is true, he likes older women.'

Harry soon found it much more difficult to cast wards when he kept accidentally brushing against his casting partner. 'Were her clothes always that tight?'

Omake by meteoricshipyards

"Ah, Nymph..."

"Watch it!"

"Miss Tonks. Er, please put down that wand, I only want to talk to you.

"Kingsley tells me that you have some vacation time coming up."

"Yes, two weeks in Monte Carlo. I've had the booking for almost a year. And rooms at the Royale don't come cheap."

"If I were to reimburse you for your trouble and the money you've already put into your vacation, could I convince you to spend your time in America looking for Harry."

"Possibly. Where would I look?"

"Let me show you the map of where we've searched."

Tonks took a moment to study the map. "How about I search that city?"

"Thank you, NymPPPPP! Pardon, me, Miss Tonks. I'll mark that city as being searched and await your report when you get back."

"Please forward me the money as soon as possible, and I'll make the travel arrangements, Professor."

"Of course, NNNnnn -- Miss Tonks."

Omake The One Who Bakes by Glen Hulbert

We are Aurors.

We walk in the dark alleys no other witch will enter.

We stand on the bridge, and no spell may pass.

We live for the fudge, we die for the fudge.

"Err, Boss."

Amelia Bones looked up from her desk to the three witches standing in her office doorway. She had a pretty good idea what this was about.

"Yes?"

"Well...some of us were wondering about the Minister's new protection detail"

"Hmm" Hah, spot on. She should really reward herself for being right. Perhaps one of Harry's little caramel pecan tarts. Her eyes almost shivered closed at the mere thought. No, no. Focus, old girl, focus. Work now, heaven later! She barely managed to drag her attention back to the three witches as they continued.

"Err, it's just that, well, you rearranged all the teams yesterday, splitting up some long standing partnerships, just so Fudge has all-male protection. Granted, some of them are fairly good, but most of the ministry's top female Aurors are just sitting in the office today. You always have a good reason for the decisions you make, but some of us are wondering if something big is going on"

Perfect, Amelia thought. She pointed at the chairs in front of her desk. "Sit."

While the three Aurors scrambled for chairs, trying to figure out how much trouble they were in, Amelia walked out of her office and over to her pink haired co-conspirator's desk.

"Auror Tonks," she said, catching the young woman's eye. "Gather them, it's time."

Tonks nodded solemnly, but her eyes gleamed with anticipation.

Returning to her office, Amelia started casting spells.

A little over half-an-hour later, Amelia's now greatly expanded office was packed with every female auror and hit-witch employed by the ministry.

They watched as she put up a series of security and privacy wards around the office, before opening her most secure, top-secret safe and removing one of the semi-translucent plastic containers within. Placing it on her desk, she carefully removed the lid and gazed, reverently, at what lay within.

One of the senior Aurors, Stoneham, a 40-year street-auror with even more combat experience than Mad-Eye Moody, was curious. The look on her boss's face was disconcerting. Never, in all the years she had known Bones, had she seen her affected this way.

She leaned forward to have a look, and blinked. It was nearly full of small white cubes. The cubes appeared to have dark swirls running through them.

"Is that fudge?"

"NO!," snapped Amelia, outraged. She shut her eyes, and took several long, deep, calming breaths. It's not their fault. They didn't know. They couldn't possibly know that the dishes of unearthly pleasure Harry put together from whatever Tonks had in her fridge were as nothing compared to his creations of divinity when he had access to any and every top of the range ingredient he wished.

"No," she said in a hushed tone, "this is not mere fudge. This is white chocolate and hazelnut praline fudge. This is fudge made by the hand of The-Boy-Who-Cooked. This is paradise on earth."

She quickly conjured some small paper plates and levitated two pieces of fudge onto each. A quick flick of her wand and each auror had a plate in hand.

"Eat," she ordered.

Seeing the hesitant looks from the Aurors at her atypical behavior, she pulled out her wand.

"I, Amelia Bones, do swear on my life and my magic that nothing detrimental will occur from eating this fudge. so mote it be."

The glow of a true oath that briefly surrounded her reassured the Aurors, who started to eat.

The groans and gasps of pleasure that filled the office for the next few minutes left Amelia Bones shaking in her chair. It was only her iron self-control, and a death grip on the arms of her chair, that prevented her from taking a piece for herself. She dare not even touch the fudge, lest she be consumed, as the others had.

As the Aurors started pulling themselves together from an experience completely outside of anything they'd ever imagined, a few of the tougher one's were wondering which of their fellows to hex first, so

that they could get the few remaining pieces left. Hands started creeping towards wands.

They froze as their boss cleared her throat.

"I should point out something else," she said, her voice carrying a more than a slight tremor. "This fudge is also low calorie and fat reduced. By about 95 percent, in fact."

This thought was too much for the assembled women, and they collapsed in orgasmic bliss. Even the most hard-boiled, like Stoneham, were curled up in their chairs, shivering, eyes glazed-over. A few of the younger ones had completely passed-out on the floor, looking like boneless puddles of pleasure.

Amelia's rapidly fraying willpower finally snapped. Before she even realized, her hand had snatched up a piece of fudge. She had one last thought before her world dissolved.

They are his now. They will keep him safe. No harm shall befall The One.

Omake by davidiusbrown

The One...

"There is no spoon. There is no spoon. There is no..."

"I'll get you one, Harry."

"No, me. I'll do it."

"You wouldn't know the best spoon to get, hussy."

"As if you would? You've never baked anything - except that time you found that peculiar strain of muggle grass."

"Oh yeah. It didn't taste anything like real grass, at least the kind you find in a tin of Bertie Bott's."

Five minutes later, Harry's kitchen counter had many, many new spoons, and a cellophane bag full of a new strange ingredient.

"Maybe I'll make brownies..."

Omake by moshehim

Susan was hungry. She went down the corridor through DMLE to her aunt's office (her parents left her in her aunt's care for the day) to ask her if she wanted to go out for launch. She reached the office and knocked on the door.

No one answered. So she opened the door and peaked in.

No one was there. Susan turned and was about to leave, when the sweets, most fragrant smell reached her nose. She turned again and took a closer look at the office. Following her nose, she ebbded by a small box. Looking in the box, she found it contained fudge. Since she was really, really hungry, she decided to have some - sure that her aunt wouldn't mind. Unless... no, it wouldn't be a sample of something poisonous, her aunt wouldn't have that in her office, certainly not on the shelves. It would go to underlings, and they'd keep that kind of things on their desks.

So she had some.

Then she had some more.

Then she had some more. And more. And more.

Soon there was no fudge left. 'I got to ask Auntie where she got that fantastic fudge' she thought. SHE'd have to tell Hanna about it - and her mother - she was a conditor, after all, she'd like to know about that magnificent creation of the kitchen.

"I wanted to thank you, Mrs. Weasley, for all the fudge you sent me over the years, so I made you some... fudge! Myself! Thanks a lot, and enjoy, Harry Potter." Molly read. the poor boy was ever so

nice. Well, she was sure the fudge was good, but hers most certainly better. Well, the kids might enjoy it. "Ginny, Ron," she called out, "Have some fudge!"

"Ah, aunt Cissy!" Tonks called. "Are you here for the will?"

"Yes, Nymphadore." replied her aunt, scathingly.

Nymphadora, for that's what she was called, seethed inside. She hated that name, and her aunt knew that. And she knew her aunt knew, and her aunt knew she knew she knew, and she couldn't do anything

about it without losing face. And her aunt knew she knew she knew she knew she knew, which made it even worse! Still, she must be polite, under these circumstances, at this time and place, kept her

decorum. So, "Here, aunt, want some fudge?"

Narcissa wanted to decline. Eat some filth the mudbloods and blood traitors whipped up? They didn't even have the grace to have house elves. No doubt, this was some more of the rubbish her third cousin,

Molly, made. Imagine that, slaving around her house like she was the elf, rather than the master... mistress... whatever. Still, under these circumstances, at this time and place, she had to keep

up a polite guise, maintain a civilized decorum, so she inclined her head and made her way to the table holding the fudge. She hesitated before picking any, but then a smell caught her attention. 'Strange', she thought, a few of the cups holding the fudge were smelling much better than the others. So she picked one and disdainfully ate it. Then she picked a second and ate it too, then a third, then a forth fifth and sixth, and ate them as well, her disdain long gone.

Who knew Molly was such great a cook? Maybe she'd hire her in the house elves stead?

She picked the seventh, and last - she noted sorrowfully - of the good fudge - and ate it as well. 'Wait a moment', she thought. 'Does the fudge have dark magic in it? By Merlin! it does! No way Molly Weasley made it.' She just had to find out who it was - and have some more!

She was sure Bella would appreciate a good evil fudge too...

Cynthia Calvert went into the room. Her friend, Porschia, Hermione's little sister, went to the rest room, and Cynthia opted to spend the time on one of her favorite pastimes, annoying Porschia's sister

Hermione. So she went to her room, ostensibly to ask her something, Hermione wasn't there. What was there, however, that caught Cynthia's attention, was a box of fudge. And a large one, at

that.

'Oh', Cynthia smirked, 'Hermione is going to be in so much trouble...' She never liked the uppity girl, but she was her friend's sister, and she had to put up with her. So she took the box and went down to tell Hermione's mum about it. She was a dentist, and dentists didn't like sweets. Especially not these dentists. And Cynthia was sure Hermione's punishment would be harsh and severe - her mother was a dentist, after all.

"And you found it in Hermione's room, you say?" asked Emma. "Hmmm.. that's not very nice of Hermione, not sharing it with me."

"What?" Cynthia couldn't believe it. Instead of rebuking and punishing Hermione for having fudge, Emma Granger actually ate it herself. And moaned with pleasure. 'must be a really good fudge if she didn't get angry.'

'Give me that,' she said, scowling, took the box of fudge, and commenced to taste it. It really was good. It really was that good! she moaned in pleasure.

Right then Porschia came down the stairs to see what the commotion, and all the moans were about. What she found astounded her. Her mother and her friend eating fudge! Candy! In her house! Something weird was going on. Then she heard Cynthia moan "It really is that good!"

'Well,' thought Porschia, 'got to use the opportunity and have some herself'. If she was Hermione, her thoughts would be more along the lines of "Carpe Deum!" or something similar, but she wasn't - she was cool, and popular, nothing like her nerdy sister. Still- A moment



later she was moaning in pleasure, agreeing with Cynthia wholeheartedly. It really was that good!

Just then the door to the kitchen opened, and Licinia, Porschia's older - oldest - sister, came in. She only arrived back home from her first year in Cambridge the previous day, and was now surprised to see how much things have changed in her absence - her mother and sister - and a guest - were all eating candy - fudge - in their own kitchen! That she must see for herself... and smell... and taste...

"Better not have dad find about it" said Porschia. They all quite agreed on that - better not have Dan find out they were all sabotaging their dental health -in his own home, non the least .A collective shudder went through them. The man was not an oral surgeon for nothing, after all. So they decided to finish all the fudge there and get rid of the evidence. Not, that there was any debate about it. Only Cynthia, who had some nasty traits, opted to keep some for later, when she could taunt her sister - her twin sister with the sweet

tooth - with eating the best fudge in the world and not sharing it.

She didn't recon on her twin simply taking it forcefully from her hand and hastily swallowing it whole... Boy, that girl could swallow...

"We are Aurors.

We walk in the dark alleys no other witch will enter.

We stand on the bridge, and no spell may pass.

We live for the fudge, we die for the fudge." hummed one auror.

"Oh, yes, fudge's pure orgasm!" agreed another.

One of the assless chaps who was spying on the aurors for Lord Voldemort heard them. Maybe, maybe Fudge batted the other way as well? He dared hope. And if not, well, they were Death Eaters, they'd just take what they want. And when they tired, they could deliver the minister to their master, that'll make him happy. Perhaps happy enough to crucio them a little? So he decided. They were going to kidnap Fudge.

Plan in mind, the assless chap went to find his friends and tell them about it. His master wouldn't be happy with him for abandoning his post, but that was more important for the cause... and if his

master was angry enough - maybe he would crucio him good a little?

Disclaimer: Don't really feel like writing a real chapter so . . .

Bunch O'make

OMAKE: The Will

"If I can have your attention please," the Solicitor said loudly. "The reading is about to begin." He gave a slow look around the room. "I Sirius Orion Black being of sound mind and body would like to begin this will by making a confession, I am responsible for the near certain death of my godson. May god forgive me for I know Lily and James will not."

Everyone gasped in horror and several eyes turned to look at Harry.

"Harry dear," Molly cried as she did her best to squeeze the life out of the 'boy-who-was-about-to-die.'

"If I may continue," the Solicitor said loudly. "The story starts, as many do with the best of intentions. Harry, I know how much you hate your relatives and I know the trouble you've had with the Ministry so I resolved to solve both of those problems with a simple ritual. I made you my heir and to prevent my cousins from challenging this, I used a simple ritual to make you a member of the Black family. As my heir and my death, you are the Black. The problem is my parents, they didn't like how close James and I were in school and feared that we would do as they would, that is that we would follow pureblood traditions and join the families through a marriage. A Black male controlling the Potter family was nothing to worry about, their bigotry convinced them that blood would tell and that I was a sport . . . an anomaly and certainly not a true Black. They had hoped that it was all a phase I was going through and that I would eventually come out of it and return to the family. On the other hand, a Potter male in control of the Black family could not be tolerated, again their bigotry blinded them . . . they believed that blood would tell and the Black family would fall. It must have taken them years to figure out the spell work and I suspect that the amount of power that went in to it is what killed my parents, a wizard can not live long without their magic and the amount to make this curse work must have been astounding. Harry, all I can say is that I didn't know and that I had hoped to find a way to remove it before you came of age. I'd planed to solve it and then tell

you after the danger had been averted, Dumbledore was always saying that you did not need the extra pressure and I reluctantly agreed with his sentiment . . . perhaps I was a fool but I did not wish to add to your troubles.” The Solicitor looked up from the will. “It finishes with, I Sirius Black being of sound mind and body leave all of my worldly goods to my godson Harry Potter. I want you to spend it all on hookers and booze, enjoy the time you have left and forget this war, Voldemort will be defeated, there's no need for you to be part of it.”

“What's the curse,” Hermione demanded.

“Excuse me?” The Solicitor asked.

“What is the specifications of the curse?” Hermione growled.

“If a male of the Potter family should become Head of House Black, then he shall have no more then six months to live.”

“And the escape clause?” Hermione persisted. “No curse that powerful can be cast without an escape clause,” she growled. “What's the way out of this one?”

“Mr. Potter must have carnal relations with several women,” the Solicitor said calmly.

“That shouldn't be . . .”

“Which must include the following,” the Solicitor interrupted. “A daughter of the Weasley family . . .”

“Yes,” Ginny cheered.

“Ahem, if I may continue?”

“Sorry,” the grinning girl said smugly. “Go on.”

“A girl who has seen a slockwart, a brilliant witch that is also a muggle born, a willing female of family Black, a metamorph, a pair of identical twins that were sorted into different houses, and no less then two heiresses of the great families. Impossible as you can see, while

there is a daughter of the Weasley family . . . the first in several generations, it would not be possible to find any of the others. Slockwarts are mythical creatures so finding a girl who's seen one is . . .”

“I've seen one,” Luna said serenely. “It had a glowing red nose.”

“Will that work?” Hermione demanded.

“So long as she really believes it,” the Solicitor agreed. “But it would be nearly impossible to find a muggle born witch that is also the top student at Hogwarts, not to say anything bad about them but very few overcome the handicap of coming to magic late. In fact, believe that last one to truly excel was Mr. Potter's mother Lily. Apparently the Blacks considered her a fluke and took it as given that it had and could never happen again.”

“I have the top grades in my year,” Hermione said in excitement. “And I'm muggle born, we might actually be able to do this.”

“Be that as it may, a willing female of the Black family would be impossible, the only two that I am aware of are the Black sisters Narcissa and Bellatrix, knowing their positions I'm afraid . . .”

“I'm a Black,” Tonks volunteered. “Mum got kicked out of the family but Sirius readmitted her . . . I'm also a metamorph so I guess that's two birds with one stone.”

“Still,” the Solicitor said sadly. “You won't be able to find a pair of identical twins that were sorted into different houses, as you know identical twins are always sorted into the same house and . . .”

“Except for me and my sister,” Padma said loudly.

“Well . . . there is still one condition to meet. Two heiresses of the great families, I am sorry Mr. Potter but you may console yourself with the fact that your last few months will be happy.”

“I'm the last of my line,” Susan said firmly. “And I think Hanna has enough Hufflepuff spirit to help out here eh Hanna?”

"You know it Susan," the other girl agreed.

"I see," the Solicitor said in shock. "Congratulations Mr. Potter, you're going to live after all."

"Come on Harry," Hermione said firmly. "We need to find a hotel room and . . ."

"Stay there for no less than six months," the Solicitor interjected. "Casting the Constans Futuere charm on him every morning and each of you copulating with him no less than once a day, though it'd be safer to do it at least three times a day each in multiple positions. Knowing what I know of magic, I believe it would also be helpful to mix things up . . . I happen to have an assortment of sex manuals in my desk that I would be happy to lend you."

"Let's go girls," Ginny cheered. The group of girls grabbed Harry and marched out of the room . . . it didn't occur to anyone that Sirius had invited several people not named in his will for several weeks, and it took another two months to notice that the girls needed break the curse just happened to be present for the reading. No one thought much of it, when they put the two things together they just figured that Sirius had done what he'd had to, Harry's safety would always be a priority for the man . . . even in death.

Six months later, a somewhat pregnant Hermione answered the door to the beach side villa the group was staying in to find the Solicitor. "Yes?"

"I was instructed by Mr. Black to give you this letter on this day," he explained. "Good day."

"Thank you," Hermione said. "Now if you'll excuse me, we're in the middle of something."

"No problem," the Solicitor said with a grin. "Good day."

"Bye," Hermione said as she slammed the door. Walking past the pregnant Tonks, and stepping over the pregnant Luna. "Harry."

"Mumph?"

"You got a letter from Sirius . . . should I open it?"

"Mes mees."

"Ok, it says . . ." Hermione looked up with a shocked look on her face. "Harry, figured you could use some cheering up. Who loves you baby, hope you've had fun."

"Mwaaa?"

"There wasn't a curse," Hermione said dully.

"You didn't know?" Luna asked happily.

"You knew it was a trick?" Hermione screamed.

"Of course I did," Luna agreed. "Why else would things be so suspiciously convenient"? Besides, only an idiot would believe that something as silly as slockwarts exist."

"Why didn't you say anything?" Hermione growled.

"Because some Harry time is better then no Harry time," Luna explained. "None of you are the type to share under normal circumstances."

"Uh . . ." Tonks said with a blush.

"Except for Tonks and myself of course," Luna amended herself. "I'm next."

AN: If you had to cheer up your godson, what would you do? Can you think of a better way? Yeah, I thought so. Lot's of fics where Sirius has some sort of odd clause in his will that doesn't pass the logic test, here's another.

OMAKE: True EVIL

"Come with me," Bella ordered. Several of the new recruits jumped to their feet and assembled.

"Where are we going?" One of the duller recruits asked.

“CRUCIO,” Bella giggled as the man screamed. “We’re going to teach a mudblood a lesson,” she explained. “That lesson is that Dumbledore can not protect your family. Does anyone else have any questions?” The group shook their heads. “Pity.”

They arrived in front of a small building proclaiming it to be Granger dentistry, drew their wands and walked inside with mayhem on their minds.

“Can I help . . . Doctors Granger, come right away,” the receptionist screamed. Hermione’s parents rushed in and took stock of the situation.

“It’s no use,” Bella cackled. “I . . . hey, stop ignoring me.”

“Look at these teeth,” Hermione’s mother said in disgust. “They’re all going to have to come out.”

“These ones too,” Hermione’s father agreed as he examined another Death Eater. “Nurse Payne, Nurse Agony, strap them to the chairs.”

“Yes Doctor,” the nurses agreed. “Should we call the anaestheseologist and tell him to come in?”

“It’ll take hours for him to get here,” Hermione’s mother protested. “And I want to get these teeth out as soon as possible.”

“Use the extra strong straps,” Hermione’s father agreed.

“Yes Doctors Granger,” the nurses agreed.

“You,” Hermione’s mother said. Bellatrix froze under the intense glare the woman fixed her with. “Show me your teeth.” A few short moments of examination Hermione’s mother gave a grudging nod. “It could be better but I don’t see anything that requires surgery . . . take a seat, I’ll see you later.”

“May I watch what you’re going to do to them?” Bella asked hopefully.

“Might as well let her,” Hermione’s father opinioned. “It’ll be a nice lesson on why proper oral hygiene is so important.”



The next few hours were the most fascinating of Bella's life, she saw pain, she saw agony, she saw two individuals who seemed to revel in inflicting horror on others.

"How could I have been so blind?" Bella asked herself. All her life she'd been told that muggles were inferior, all her life she'd been told that they were nothing but dirt beneath a pureblood's boots . . . all her life she'd been wrong. "Master, Mistress," Bella cried as she threw herself to the ground. "I'll do anything, just take me as your servant, your student, your slave."

"I could use a maid," Mrs. Granger mused.

"I'll do it," Bella agreed. "I'll be your maid, I'll service you in bed, I'll teach your daughter every bit of magic I know. Just please, let me watch as you do this again."

"Just watch?" Hermione's father asked with an amused smile. It was nice to finally find someone that valued dentistry as much as he and his wife did. "Wouldn't you like to help?"

"Help?" That one word sent Bella spiraling into a vortex of pleasure. "Can I . . . help?"

"It doesn't take long to become certified as a dental hygienist," he assured the woman. "After that . . . who knows, you might even have what it takes to become a dentist or even an oral surgeon like my wife and I."

"Master," she kissed his foot. "Mistress," she kissed her foot. "I am yours."

One Day Later . . .

"Former Master," Voldemort read. "I have found true evil, I have seen true pain inflicted, and I have compared it to you and found you wanting. I am leaving your service and that idiot husband of mine to pursue my dream, torturing muggles and having them pay me for it. sincerely, Bella."

"She always was a crazy bitch master," Wormtail consoled his boss.

"She'll be back in a week tops," Voldemort said calmly. "Remind me to punish her severely for this affront to my dignity."

"Yes Master."

"CRUCIO."

Three weeks later . . .

"Ak," Hermione squawked. "Bellatrix LeStrange."

"Welcome home young mistress," Bella said happily. "When would you like to begin your magic lessons?"

"Why don't we wait a few days on that huh Bella?" Hermione's mother asked. "She just got out of school after all."

"Yes mistress," Bella agreed happily.

"Mum?"

Omake: Accidents Happen

"Rubber Ducky, you're the one," Voldemort sang as he showered. "I . . . ahhhhhhh," he relieved himself down the drain. "Nothing better then . . . woah." The most feared Dark Lord in recent memory slipped, cracked his head, and drowned in a puddle composed mainly of his own urine.

His body was discovered three hours later by his most faithful servant. "M'Lord I . . . " Lucius looked down at the body in shock, "he's dead . . . he's finally dead, this means." He rushed out of the room to tell the others.

"What have you gathered us here for Lucius?" One of the other Death Eaters demanded.

"That's Lord Foymaluiusluc to you slave," Lucius sneered. "Voldemort is dead, I'm your master now . . . CRUCIO."

"Hell with that," another Death Eater growled. "Reducto." Pretty soon curses were flying around the room.

Severus Snape was no idi . . . idio . . . I can't say it. Severus Snape was an idiot, but he wasn't dumb enough to stay in the middle of the massive melee that threatened to extinguish the once mighty Death Eaters. He took nearly half a dozen dark curses on his way out the door and he was the sole survivor of the Dark Lord's forces by the time he got to the edge of the wards and was close to death when he appeared in the middle of Diagon Alley.

"Voldemort is dead, the Death Eaters are all dead." he said to the shocked crowd of shoppers. "Harry Potter . . .urk." Had nothing to do with it, he had intended to say before he was cut off by a blow to the back of the head welded by Hogwarts caretaker Argus Filch.

"Has saved us all again," Filch cheered. His shovel raised and came down to hit the fallen Death Eater in the back of the head. "Three cheers for Potter."

Hip, hip, Horay!

Clang!

Hip, hip, Horay!

Clang!

Hip, hip, Horay!

Clang!

Filch smacked Snape in the head with each cheer, thinking about what Potter had said about what house the primary mess makers of the school belonged to and who encouraged them to make more work for the squib.

Harry didn't learn about his 'Grand Triumph' as the press labeled it, until three days after the event. The boy continually protested his innocence, telling the world that he had nothing to do with any fight with the Death Eaters . . . no one believed him. Some of the more astute observers noticed Harry's stiff movements and bruises. They came to the obvious conclusion that they were the result of his epic battle, actually the result of a short argument with Dudley that

resulted in cracked ribs for Harry and a broken nose for Dudley since Harry was fed up with abuse after his fifth year of Hogwarts and more then willing to fight back. They worried that their savior might be two steps from death's door, citing his three day absence after the grand duel. Several Hogwarts girls named themselves the sisters of mercy, with the exception of Luna who insisted she was just a distant cousin, and tended to Harry's every need, whether he liked it or not, and so Harry gained new bruises, a couple of bite marks and a new reason for the stiffness in his movements.

And so the world changed . . .

AN: More of an outline then an Omake, had the idea and had to jot it out. dogbertcarroll added a bit to this, made it better in my opinion.

wt4dave

"I had nothing to do with it Ron! I've been in a cheap motel for the last 3 days!"

"Harry, it's okay! I learned my lesson during fourth year. I won't get all jealous and be a prat about it."

"Grrr... Hermione! You believe me don't you?"

"Honestly, Harry, for once don't be so modest! I mean, what are trying to say, that Voldemort slipped, fell, and drowned in the bath tub and the Death Eaters all killed each other in a fight for leadership?"

Omake: The Second Task used

Harry struggled to carry the two wet girls as he walked out of the lake to complete the second task in the tournament.

"Gabrielle," Fleur cried happily. "Oh thank you 'arrie. you 'ave saved my sister."

"No problem Fleur." Harry blushed when the older girl gave him a sloppy kiss on the cheek. "Happy to help."

"Where is Mr. Weasley Harry?" Dumbledore demanded.

"Back at the bottom of the lake," Harry replied. "Why?"

"And why didn't you bring him with you?" The old wizard prompted.

"Cause I could only manage two people professor," Harry said slowly, as if talking to a simpleton. "Hermione and a cute little French girl, let Victor rescue his own hostage."

"Mr. Weasley was your hostage Harry," Dumbledore sighed.

"What?" Harry asked in shock. "But . . . but you said the person I'd miss the most."

"And that's Mr. Weasley . . . isn't it?"

"I don't know what rumors you've been hearing but Ron a mate . . . not my mate."

"That's . . ."

"Don't get me wrong, he's a good bloke. But Hermione here supported me, helps me with my homework, and is an all around useful girl to have around. Ron? Well, he's fun but not irreplaceable. I would have rescued him anyway but it came down between him and a cute little girl, no gentleman would leave a defenseless little girl at the bottom of the lake and . . . well, I kinda thought that Ron was the person Victor would miss the most."

"And why would Mr. Krum miss Mr. Weasley?" Dumbledore asked, fearing the answer.

"Ron's a big Quidditch fan," Harry explained. "I just sort of assumed that he'd do anything for his hero . . . anything. Didn't want to think much about it to be honest."

IIIIIIII

"Harry," a dripping Ron yelled as he walked into the common room. "Why didn't you rescue me."

"Man code," Neville said simply.

"M . . ." Ron's eyes crossed. "Section sixty nine?"

"Yep and forty three."

"Sorry bout that Harry," Ron said with an embarrassed expression on his face. "Should have thought things through first."

"No problem Ron."

"So you're ok with the fact that Harry left you on the bottom of the lake?" Hermione asked incredulously.

"Course I am," Ron agreed. "You heard Neville didn't you?"

"I . . . but . . ." the girl sputtered.

IIIIIIIIII

"How's it feel that Potty left you on the bottom of the lake?" Draco sneered.

"Man code," Ron said simply.

"Man . . . wait, rule sixty nine?"

"Yep and forty three.," Ron agreed.

"Oh . . . gimme a sec then." Draco closed his eyes for a few seconds. "So how's it feel now that Potty has more fame then ever?"

"Fuck off Malfoy," Ron yelled.

Addition by ubereng

"Don't get me wrong, he's a mostly a good bloke but for much of this year he's been a right prat. I also get the feeling that if we were ever camping and the going got rough, he'd leave me in the lurch.

HERMIONE, however, always supports me, helps me with my homework, and is an all around useful girl. Have you noticed how she filled out that gown at the yule ball? I'd DEFINITELY miss those, I mean her.

Ron? Well, he's fun but not irreplaceable. I would have rescued him anyway but it came down between him and a cute little girl. No gentleman would leave a defenseless little girl at the bottom of the lake and . . . well, I kinda thought that Ron was the person Victor would miss the most. He's a great fan who isn't pushy, clingy or demanding of his Quidditch stars."

OMAKE: What Should Have Been

The Headmaster's office was silent as Dumbledore finished talking.

"I see," Harry said coldly. "May I have a piece of parchment? I'm also going to need a quill and a bit of ink."

"Harry I . . ."

"A simple yes or now will suffice," Harry interrupted.

"Here you are Harry," Dumbledore said in confusion. "But I . . ."

"Be silent please." Harry wrote a short note and handed it to the Headmaster, "since I doubt you respect my privacy enough to let this go without reading it."

"Voldemort, as I see it there are four people directly responsible for the deaths of my parents and godfather." Dumbledore looked up in horror. "Harry you can't mean . . ."

"Just read the rest of it," Harry said impassively.

"These people are Severus Snape, Peter Pettigrew, Bellatrix Lestranger, and Albus Dumbledore. If you will send me the heads of the first three and promise to make a sincere effort to end the life of the fourth and leave me and my friends in peace. I will in return send you the the contents of the prophecy and leave the United Kingdom to its fate." Dumbledore looked sick as he finished the letter. "Harry you can't hate me so much as this?"

"You're responsible for the deaths of my parents and godfather." Harry raised a finger. "You're responsible for my childhood." He raised another. "You're likely responsible for several other things that

I'm unaware of.” He raised a fourth finger. “And to top it all of you've been granting the murder of my parents sanctuary and employment here at Hogwarts where he abuses his position to torment me . . . I'm talking of course about Severus Snape. In light of all of that, how could I not?”

“I . . .”

“Now if you'll excuse me,” Harry said as he stood and took the letter back. “I'd like to get this letter posted as soon as possible. Have a good evening Headmaster.”

AN: Alternate title was; 'How I Would React.' Not in the best of moods a the moment, then again I doubt Harry would have been in a great mood when he was in that office so . . .



Disclaimer: Not my usual fare, but fun to write.

Reunion

"Well isn't that a sight for sore eyes."

A smile bloomed on Hermione's face and she turned with a look of anticipation. "Harry?"

"The same," he agreed.

"I'm so glad you came," Hermione said happily. "It's been what . . . seven years?"

"Close to eight," Harry replied. "I figured this reunion would be small enough without me missing it."

"You know what they call us?"

"Hmmm?"

"Hogwarts' lost class," Hermione said. "They even folded the year above us and the year under us into it."

"Not many classes have survivors rather than graduates," Harry mused. "Who's showed up?"

"Luna, Ginny, Susan, Hanna, Dean, Fred, Neville . . ."

"Neville?" Harry interrupted. "So he's . . ."

"The same," Hermione said sadly. "No change, they put him in a bed next to his parents."

"Why's he here?"

"The Healers thought it might do some good to have him around familiar faces," she explained.

"Did it?"

"No," she sighed. "Not that I could tell."

"Did they bring Ron?" He asked, fearing the answer.

"No." Hermione shook her head. "No point, there isn't any hope that he'll come back. They're only keeping his body alive for Molly. Ron's dead, his heart just doesn't know it."

"He never did know when to quit . . . dumb bastard."

"Yeah."

"So what have you been doing with yourself?" Harry asked to break the silence. "Aside from being the youngest Charms Professor in two centuries."

"Two in a half," Hermione said with mock arrogance. "And the youngest Deputy in four."

"Deputy Headmistress too?" Harry said with a grin. "I'm impressed."

"Hello Hermione," Luna said as she walked up. "Harry, I'm surprised to see you here . . . considering."

"Considering what?" Hermione asked.

"Considering that I'm the lead suspect in several murders," Harry said calmly. "And because Luna here is an Auror."

"Murders?"

"You didn't hear?" Luna asked. "Someone hunted down every 'alleged' Death Eater that escaped prosecution."

"Didn't wonder why you haven't seen Malfoy?" Harry said with a shrug. "Took them three years to get them all."

"And the majority of them died very nasty deaths," from Luna's tone of voice she could have been talking about the weather. "Harry here is the lead suspect."

"They say it took poor Draco three days to die," Harry mused. "Someone wasn't happy about what he did to Ginny."

"How'd you hear that?" Luna asked. "The three days thing I mean."

"When you're the 'Boy-Who-Lived' and 'the-slayer-of-Voldemort' people tell you things," Harry replied. "I think it's because of the hyphens."

"That must be it," Luna agreed. "Did anyone tell you things about the possible fate of Umbridge and Fudge?"

"I thought Umbitch committed suicide?" Harry asked.

"She picked a particularly slow and painful way to do it then," Luna giggled.

"Let me put it this way," Harry began. "So far as I know she committed suicide."

"Oh . . . thank you Harry, and Fudge?"

"Drained every account he could and fled to bermuda," Harry said. "To retire to the sandy beaches."

"Thank you again Harry," Luna said serenely. "I'll have to pay him a visit."

"Assigned to the Fudge case?"

"Hmmm . . . yes, why do you ask?"

"Because the only way he's coming back here is in a box," Harry responded. "Seams that someone broke into his villa and set him on fire. They did all they could be he died in the hospital one week later. So sad."

"You always did know how to hold a grudge Harry," Luna laughed.

"What are you doing with yourself Harry?" Hermione asked to change the subject.

"I kill people," Harry said bluntly. "If a country has a blossoming Dark Lord they call me and I take care of the problem."

"Enthusiastically and cheerfully," Luna chirped.

"What can I say? I love my job . . . sides, it was the only thing I've ever been really good at. Dumbledore dedicated his life to bringing peace to the magical world, I like to think I'm continuing his work."

"I doubt that Dumbledore would have agreed with your methods Harry," Luna said dryly.

"Different men, different methods."

"There are better ways to bring peace to the world Harry," Hermione said calmly.

"Dumbledore's way brought us to the point where we barely have a sustainable population," Harry pointed out. "Mine seems to be working much better."

"I didn't say I disagreed with you," Hermione replied. "Just that there were better ways."

"Like what?"

"You'll find out if my project is successful," Hermione retorted. "Seven years of work, I started right after you left last time."

"What's this mysterious project then?" Susan asked as she walked up to the group.

"Terribly mysterious," Hermione replied. "How do you like the Department of Mysteries?"

"I'd tell you . . ."

"But you'd have to kill us," the rest of the group chorused.

"But it would bore you to tears," Susan corrected. "My department has a cool name, but spell development and research aren't the things adventures make."

"I notice you're getting around better than you used to," Harry commented. "Did they . . ."

"No, I've just gotten used to the prosthetics. Two legs isn't too bad a price to get through the war considering what happened to some of us. "

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "So . . ."

"So . . ." The group looked at each other , all trying to find something to break the awkward silence.

"Could I have a few hairs from each of you?" Hermione blurted. "And some blood if possible?"

"Why?"

"That project I mentioned earlier," Hermione said. "I swear to you that I have no reason to believe that it will harm any of you . . . or me."

"What is this project?" Harry demanded, there was a time when he would have provided Hermione with whatever she asked without question. Then again there was also a time that he wouldn't have been able to skin a man alive, sadly both times had passed.

"I've done the numbers," Hermione began. "Thanks in part to Harry's efforts, the United Kingdom's magical population is no longer at sustainable levels. This years graduating class will be larger then ours but . . ."

"But you can count ours on two hands," Harry said with a nod. "Fingers left over if you don't count Neville and Ron."

"There are things we could do to keep our numbers up," Hermione continued. "But none of the . . . palatable methods would leave our culture intact."

"Are you sure that's a bad thing?" Susan asked. "Look what our culture has brought us."

"It's a valid point," Hermione allowed. "But at best it's a side issue, it's not important enough for me to worry about."

"So what's this plan of yours?"

"Have you ever wondered what it would be like to go back?" Hermione asked suddenly. "To change the past?"

"Every day," Susan said quickly. "But it's impossible, you can't change time."

"Not with a time turner," Hermione said with a grin. "You can send your personality back and you can change the past. I've already successfully tested it and it works."

"What?"

"We spent a normal night catching up with each other," Hermione said. "The party broke up around midnight and we all agreed to keep in touch but as of two months later none of us except Susan and I have said a word to one another. I had Susan check my calculations the day before I came back and she agreed that everything should work."

"So you . . . came back?"

"So I came back," Hermione agreed. "I should be able to get us back about twenty years with a five year margin of error . . . how about it? We can save everyone, I figure the addition of a battle hardened Auror, a spell developer, the Deputy Headmistress of Hogwarts, and a psychotic assassin, should be enough to bring about a more favorable outcome. And if not, well then we can always try again and again until we get things right."

"I'm in," Harry said immediately. "I do what I do to make the world a better place, seems that this'll give me a chance to do just that."

"I'm in as well," Luna agreed after a moment of thought. "Especially if it gives me a chance to save mummy."

"Susan?" Hermione asked nervously.

"Are you kidding?" Susan asked incredulously. "A chance to make history with a spell thought impossible? Of course I'm in, besides it's not like anyone of us will lose anything if something goes wrong is it?" The group nodded grimly at her question. "So, when do we start?"

AN: An idea that's been bothering me for a while, thought I'd take the time to put pen to paper.

### OMAKE: Loving Relations

Harry awoke with a groan, the first thing he noticed was that the world seemed larger than it once did. "It . . . worked?" He asked with an amused smile. "Wonder how old I am?" Shrugging the matter off, Harry examined his surroundings and found that he was back in his cupboard. "Be it ever so humble," he muttered as he popped the lock. According to the clock, it was a little before three in the morning so Harry figured that he had about four hours to arrange things and six before his 'loving family' woke up.

Harry ghosted up the stairs and into his Aunt and Uncle's room, a few minutes of rummaging garnered him an old fashioned hat pin from his Aunt's jewelry box and two quick thrusts between the vertebrae paralyzed two of the people that had shaped Harry into what he was.

Harry was gathered everything portable, valuable, and easily missed into a small pile. It wasn't like Petunia and Vernon were going to need it, he reasoned, and no sense letting it go to waste.

"This would have been so much easier if one of them smoked," Harry grouched to himself as he rewired an outlet. "Electrical fires take so much time to arrange." Shrugging the matter off, Harry drained the battery on the smoke detector with a small application of magic before turning to complete his task. On the other hand, he thought to himself, Dudley hasn't really done anything yet . . . sighing, he replaced the battery before sparking the fire. Why not let fate decide if the fat boy should live? He reasoned as he disappeared into the night. After all, he could always return to finish the job if Dudley became the man he had in the old timeline.

IIIIIIII

Electrical Fire Leaves Boy Orphaned, Hermione felt a wave of excitement as she read the story about the tragic deaths of the Dursleys. Harry had returned, her plan had worked, even if it was just the two of them her plan had worked.

Disclaimer: This started out as a short Omake and grew.

## Elementary

Harry was eight years old and he'd been called into the Headmaster's office along with his cousin Dudley for a meeting. It wasn't long before his aunt and uncle arrived to explain that their little Dudders couldn't possibly have done anything wrong and that even if he had, it was only because he'd been pushed into it by that rotten cousin of his.

"Really," the Headmaster said with a look of satisfaction. "We all know that simply can not be true, Dudley may be dull but his cousin Harry is even worse . . . bottom of his class as a matter of fact. No . . . no Dudley planned the whole thing, must have strained his rather limited intelligence, while Harry was jut along for the ride . . . I'm going to expel both of them of course but Dudley is the only one I'm going to recommend charges against."

"Dudley didn't do it," Harry spoke his first words since he'd been dragged into the office.

"You see," Vernon said with a pleased grin. "The boy admits it."

"I didn't do it either," Harry said calmly. "The theft was committed by Roger Wilson and you know it, you're just covering for him since he's your sister's eldest son and your nephew."

"How did you . . ." he began. "Open that mouth again and I'll see you in the gaol along with that fat cousin of yours."

"Speak boy," Vernon commanded. "Start from the beginning."

"Yes uncle Vernon," Harry agreed. "I first began to suspect Roger when I remembered that I didn't see him outside for quite a while after the fire alarm had been pulled, when I did I noticed that he had a bit of ink on one of his knuckles."

"That doesn't prove anything," the Headmaster blustered.

"Continue boy," Vernon said with a look of satisfaction.



"As you all know, the switches of the fire alarm are covered in ink . . . the very same shade of ink on Roger's knuckle as it so happens but the Headmaster is right, that alone doesn't prove anything."

"Hah."

"What proves it is the fact that Roger's finger prints are on the petty cash box."

"You little bastard," the Headmaster yelled as he lunged across his desk . . . and right into Vernon's waiting fist.

"S'what you get when you try ta frame my son," Vernon said with a look of satisfaction on his face.

"Good work lad," they all turned to look at a man standing in the office door. "Inspector Robert Green, I heard everything."

"Why'd you help me?" Dudley demanded.

"Well." Years of living with the Dursleys had taught Harry that there was a time and a place for the truth. "You're my cousin, we're supposed to look after each other." And this wasn't time for the truth.

"Right you are lad," the Inspector said with a grin. "But there's just one thing I don't understand."

"What is it sir?"

"How'd you know we'd find the thief's fingerprints on the cash box?"

"I wasn't sure Roger had done it until after we'd been called into the office and I noticed a picture of the Headmaster and Roger, the caption read 'me, my sister Mary, the bastard she married, and my nephew Roger.' That's when I knew that there was only one reason the Headmaster would have accused me and Dudley. For the fingerprints . . . well, if he wasn't careful enough to wear gloves when he was going to pull the alarm then I didn't think he'd be careful enough to wear them when he broke into the box."

"Excellent bit of deduction lad."

"Good work boy," Vernon agreed, mindful of the Inspector and thinking of the lawsuit he was going to file. "Very good work."

London, several years later . . .

"And that's why the thief could be none other than." Harry paused for dramatic effect. "Mister Moore, the bank president."

"You little bastard," the man screamed. Harry watched impassively as the man got closer and closer before being tackled by several large constables.

"It was an excellent job you did, framing Mister Weatherby," Harry continued. "Shame for you that no plan is perfect."

"Good work Harry," one of the inspectors said with a grin. "Another feather in your cap."

"Couldn't have done it without Dudley here," Harry said modestly. "If he hadn't noticed the mark on the vault door, then I might have never solved it."

"Sure you would have Harry," Dudley said quickly, red from the praise.

"Perhaps," Harry allowed. "Shall we go home?"

"Mum's making a roast," Dudley said with a grin. "And she always has a pie waiting for us after we solve a mystery."

"Excellent," Harry said with a smile. "If you will excuse us Inspector, I'm afraid my Aunt Petunia gets a bit . . . difficult when we're late for dinner."

"Go ahead boys," the Inspector agreed. Damn, he couldn't wait until the pair got old enough to join the force. The lads all had a bet that crime would come to a virtual standstill the day Harry got his badge and he couldn't wait to see it.

Dinner was rather festive as it always was after an important case. Vernon leaning forward, eagerly listening to every detail Dudley shared.

"And that's how Harry did it," Dudley finished proudly.

"That true boy?" Vernon asked.

"For the most part," Harry agreed. "Once again Dudley has glossed over his own participation. I said this to the Inspector in charge of the case and I shall say it again, I could not have solved this one without Dudley's aid. In fact, I'd be hard pressed to find a case I could have solved without him."

"Really?" Petunia asked with a smile.

"It's a nice thing to say but it's not true," Dudley said with a sigh.

"You have a perspective that I do not," Harry disagreed. "And one that I'm not sure I could do without. Do not sell yourself short cousin. If you were not helpful then the police would not allow you to accompany me, remember that."

"I guess . . . yeah, thanks Harry."

"Think nothing of it cousin," Harry said with a smile.

"We'd better get to bed," Dudley said after a look at the clock.

"So soon?" Vernon asked in shock.

"We're running tomorrow," Dudley said with a frown of distaste. "Come on Harry."

"Right behind you Dudley."

The two boys got up the next morning and paused when they found an envelope addressed to Harry sitting on the floor.

"What is it?" Dudley asked.

"It appears that I am being stalked by a madwoman," Harry said thoughtfully. "Or possibility a madman. One should never take things at face value."

"What should we do?"

"Wake your parents and have them pack some spare clothing," Harry said immediately. "We'll have them spend a few nights at a hotel while we take this to Chief Inspector Llewelyn."

"Right," Dudley agreed. He ran up the stairs and returned a few minutes later with Harry's groggy aunt and uncle.

"What's this about boy?" Vernon demanded.

"It seems that I am the object of a crazed individual's obsession," Harry replied. "I apologize for the inconvenience but I'm afraid that as a precaution, you and Aunt Petunia will have to stay in a hotel for the next couple of days while the police handle things."

"Alright boy," Vernon agreed. "Do you need a ride?"

"If it won't inconvenience you," Harry agreed.

"Get in the car," Vernon ordered. They arrived and the desk sergeant waved them into Chief Inspector Llewelyn's office.

"How'd you get my message so soon?" The man asked in shock.

"Message?" Harry asked with a raised eyebrow.

"I asked you two to drop by today," the man explained. "We have a little something we'd like to present to you."

"Oh?"

"Yes 'oh,'" he agreed with a smile. "What's no proper young gentleman without?" Without waiting for an answer he pulled two long boxes out from under his desk and opened them with a flourish. "Walking sticks, Malacca with a silver knob."

"Walking sticks?" Harry asked flatly.

"It's strictly forbidden to carry them with the intent of using them as a weapon," the man continued. "But if you were to happen to use it for defense . . . well, no one can blame you can they? They're a bit large for you now but the two of you'll grow into them."

"I see, thank you Chief Inspector Llwyn." "

"I'll have a couple of the men bring you up to speed," Llwyn said with a grin. "So why did you come if you didn't get my message?" "

"Evidence shows that I am being stalked by a disturbed individual," Harry replied.

"What makes you think that?" The Chief Inspector asked seriously.

"I received a letter today addressed to my bedroom," Harry said as he handed it over. "I did not open it, figured the men in forensics might want a crack at it."

"This is the letter?" He asked with an amused grin.

"Yes."

"One moment." His eyes closed and he took a calming breath. "I need to call a colleague of mine in on this. If it's what I believe it to be then neither of you are in any danger."

"What you believe it to be?" "

"I'll explain later," Llwyn replied. "If I am mistaken then I'm afraid that I won't be able to share my suspicions because of the Official Secrets act."

"Why don't Dudley and I go get a bit of instruction with our sticks then?" Harry suggested. "Let us know when we can be of service." They hadn't been out of the Chief Inspector's office more than fifteen minutes before they were summoned back.

"Harry," Llwyn began. "Please allow me to introduce my colleague, Madame Amelia Bones."

"Hmmm?" Harry stared at the woman with a look of confusion.

"What is it Harry?" Llwyn asked.

"I'm wondering why she considers a thin twelve inch stick to be a weapon," Harry replied with a frown. "I'm also wondering where her badge is."

"What?" Amelia asked in shock.

"You unconsciously reached for the stick when the door opened and you didn't let it go until after you'd looked over us and dismissed us as threats," Harry explained.

"And the badge?"

"It's not clipped onto your belt and you don't have anything large enough in any of your pockets."

"I see," Amelia said with a nod. "Tell me Harry, have you decided on a profession yet?"

"I found him first," Llwelyn growled.

"Perhaps we could share him?" Amelia suggested hopefully.

"Perhaps," Llwelyn agreed sourly.

"Perhaps we could tell him what this is all about?" Harry suggested, a bit annoyed at the direction the conversation had taken. "I presume that she's here to brief me on the secret you referred to."

"Correct," Llwelyn agreed. "Amelia?"

"What about the other boy?"

"My cousin Dudley has my complete confidence," Harry replied coldly. "If you can not tell him then you can not tell me."

"Your cousin?" Amelia asked hopefully. "Live in the same house?"

"Yes," Harry agreed slowly.

"Then he's exempt from the rules and can see this," Amelia replied. "It's easiest to give you a demonstration first," she said mostly to herself. "How about a bit of transfiguration?" Her wand appeared in

her hand and with a wave, she changed Llwelyn's desk into a large and very angry badger.

"Turn it back," the Chief Inspector shouted.

"Oops," she said sheepishly and another wave returned it to normal. "Sorry about that, just wanted to show a bit of house pride. Well Harry, do you have any questions?"

"I presume that this isn't some sort of joke?" Harry calmly directed his question to the Chief Inspector.

"It was not."

"Magic is real then," Harry said slowly. "Good to know."

"That's it?" Amelia asked in disappointment, "that's your reaction? Good to know?"

"Harry never gets shocked by anything," Llwelyn said with a laugh, "eh Dudley?"

"Yeah," Dudley managed to say after a moment, "bloody frustrating sometimes."

"I'm sure."

"So what can I do for you Madame Bones?" Harry asked. "Is there a crime in the magical society that you'd like us to give our perspective on?"

"No crime," Amelia said slowly. "How'd you know I was an Auror? Come to think of it, how'd you know that there was a separate magical world?"

"Llwelyn referred to you as a colleague, you hold yourself like a constable of some sort, and I presume that you aren't the only magical user in existence, and if there are enough magicians to need the magical equivalent of a Chief Inspector . . . well, you see where I'm going with this don't you."

"I do," Amelia sighed. "I'm not here to ask for your help."

"Oh?"

"The letter you received was an acceptance letter for Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry."

"Is there a difference?"

"Pardon?"

"Between Witchcraft and Wizardry," Harry clarified.

"Witches are female and Wizards are male," Amelia replied. "The magic is the same."

"Ah."

"Well?" Amelia prompted.

"Well what?"

"Are you going to accept?"

"Possibly," Harry agreed. "Are there any other magical schools?"

"None of equivalent quality in the United Kingdom," Amelia replied quickly.

"May Dudley accompany me?"

"I'm afraid not," Amelia said. "He would have received a letter if he was qualified."

"What are the qualifications?"

"Having magical power."

"So it's not just a skill then?" Harry said thoughtfully. "I see, how might one go about testing for magical power?"

"There's a simple charm but . . ."



"Can you cast it?"

"Yes but . . ."

"Is it difficult?"

"No but . . ."

"Then please cast it on myself, Dudley, Chief Inspector Llwelyn, and yourself if you can."

"Fine," Amelia agreed with a sigh. "But I'm not sure what you expect this to do."

"Nothing?"

"What?"

"I expect it to do nothing," Harry said. "I do not wish to taint my observations with preconceptions."

"Oh." Amelia waved her wand a few times. "Chief Inspector Llwelyn has little to no magic, your cousin has low levels . . . he might be able to cast a few weak spells if he works hard enough, I can not cast it on myself, and you . . ."

"Yes?"

"You're off the charts," Amelia said as she looked up.

"Is there anyway to spoof this spell?"

"Yes, why?"

"I'd rather not have people know how powerful I am if there is the possibility that I might have to deal with them later."

"Oh," Amelia said with an approving smile. He already had the correct instincts, all it would take is a coat of polish and he'd be the stuff of nightmares for Dark Wizards. "I can do that right now if you like?"

"Please." Harry watched with interest as the woman cast the spell. "Does this make me appear to have a lower power level or does it just scramble the results?"

"It scrambles the results," Amelia replied. "Any other questions?"

"I would like to know about the schools," Harry said. "Why don't we start with Hogwarts, where is it? What does it specialize in? Why haven't I gotten a letter from any of the other schools?"

"Hogwarts is in Scotland," Amelia began.

"Oh?" Harry shared a look with Dudley. "May I see exactly where it is in Scotland?"

"Got a map Llwelyn?" Amelia asked.

"Right here Amelia," he agreed.

"Hogwarts is . . ." Amelia examined the map for a few minutes. "Right here."

"Ah." Harry sighed. "Well, I don't suppose that I'll be going to another school unless Hogwarts is particularly bad."

"Why not?"

"Smeltings is right down the road," Harry replied. "And I can't leave my assistant to brave the horrors of Public School alone can I?"

"Uh . . ." Amelia was a bit confused by Harry's answer.

"My dad went to Smeltings," Dudley explained. "And I'm already enrolled."

"Oh . . . well as to your other questions, Hogwarts specializes in general magical education though their charms program is said to be first rate, and . . . uh . . . I'm not sure why you haven't gotten acceptance letters from the other schools."

"Perhaps you could tell me why I haven't gotten any letters then?" Harry suggested.

"No," Amelia growled. "You've got a ward on you preventing it would be my guess. I know you've been sent letters before, my niece Susan had a bit of a crush on you and sent you some rather sappy love letter last month . . . poor girl was crushed when you didn't reply. I'll get to the bottom of it and then I'll personally explain to whoever is responsible what I think of people who make my Susan cry."

"Llwelyn," Harry said. "May I borrow a pen and some paper?"

"Course Harry." He pushed the items across his desk.

"Susan right?"

"Yes," Amelia agreed. She watched with a smile as Harry wrote out a quick note apologizing for the fact that he hadn't replied in a timely manner and explaining why. "Would you like me to deliver that? I can also set up a post box for your other mail."

"Please," Harry agreed. "To both. Are there magical newspapers?"

"Yes."

"How much do you think it would cost me to take out a full page ad explaining that I haven't been getting any mail and apologizing for my appalling rudeness in not replying?"

"I suspect the paper will do it for free," Amelia said with a smile. "Would you like me to take you there?"

"Please," Harry agreed. "Coming Dudley?"

"Right behind you Harry."

"Grab my robes," Amelia commanded. They disappeared with a pop and reappeared a moment later in front of a small office.

"That was a rather . . ."

"Peculiar?" Dudley suggested.

"Yes, thank you Dudley. Peculiar experience."

"You get used to it," Amelia said with a shrug. The small group spent the next hour visiting the two newspapers servicing the magical world as well as an assortment of periodicals ending with one called Teen Witch, Amelia commented sardonically that she figured more people get their information from the last than all of the others combined. "Well, I've still got a bit of time. Would you boys like to get your school supplies?"

"May as well," Harry agreed. They visited the shops and nothing was out of the ordinary until it became time to purchase their wands.

"Curious," Ollivander said with a frown.

"Oh?" Harry prompted.

"Hair from a sport, a bloodhound crossed with a grim. Wood from a truncheon used by an inspector of Scotland Yard more than one hundred years ago . . . a most unusual wand."

"But perfect for an Auror," Amelia said with a profound sense of satisfaction. "Come along boys."

She dropped Harry and Dudley off in Llwelyn's office and from there they collected Harry's relatives.

"Get things taken care of boy?" Vernon demanded.

"Yes," Harry agreed. "We shouldn't be getting anymore of those strange letters."

"Good."

"I also had one of Chief Inspector Llwelyn's colleagues arrange for my education," Harry continued. "It's in a small public school not far from Smeltings."

"Can't be too far away from Dudley huh?" Vernon asked smugly.

"It's in case we're called in to look at another problem," Harry agreed. "Much more convenient for all around if we're not far apart."

"We can also ride the same train up," Dudley said happily. "Station is closer to Harry's school but it works out since Harry's school starts sooner."

"Be sure to thank Chief Inspector Llwelyn's friend," Petunia admonished. "Understand boys?"

"We did Aunt Petunia," Harry said quickly. "She's also the one that arranged for the letters to stop."

"Good then."

The weeks past quickly and before they knew it, Harry and Dudley were on the Hogwarts express.

"Oh my god," Hermione gushed. "You're Harry Potter."

"Guilty," Harry sighed. Here we go again, he thought, another bloody fan of the bloody boy who bloody lived.

"You're the boy the police call in when they can't solve a crime," Hermione continued with sparkling eyes. "I've read all about you in the Times."

"Hardly," Harry said with a smile. "I've merely been fortunate enough to be permitted to accompany the detectives on some occasions and they've been nice enough to listen to my ideas."

"Which are always correct," Dudley cut in.

"Forgive me," Harry said with a frown. "Please allow me to introduce my assistant and partner, Dudley Dursley."

"You're here too?" Hermione squealed. "I read all about how you stopped the Mad House Murderer."

"I stuck out my foot and he tripped," Dudley said quickly. "The press always likes to . . . help me here Harry."

"Embellish our involvement," Harry suggested.

"Yes, that."

"You're both wizards?" Hermione asked hopefully.

"Harry is," Dudley agreed. "My magical levels are a bit low to be considered a wizard." He flexed his arm. "But magic isn't the only power in the world."

"Right you are Dudley," Harry said with a grin.

AN: The start of a 'Harry the Detective' story line with Dudley along as his loyal sidekick. Wouldn't be easy to write even if the next scene was Harry starting at Hogwarts but it is something I've never seen before. Yes I'm well aware of the fact that the police wouldn't really bring children into important investigations but there are plenty of examples in fiction where they do, this is just another one of them. I'm being influenced way too much by the book 'Some Danger Involved' and the others in that series, blame them. This was supposed to be a short Omake, but alas I wrote a bit more then I intended.

Omake by: Sergey Tsvetkov

"Is it true?" he said. "They're saying all down the train that Harry Potter's in this compartment. So it's you, is it?"

"Yes," said Harry. He briefly looked at the boys with a frown and returned his eyes to the book.

"And my name's Malfoy, Draco Malfoy."

"I know," Harry answered keeping attention on the book.

"Uh... You know... Of course you know! My family..."

"You are Draco S. Malfoy, pureblood, you're planning to be sorted to Slytherin, you hate muggleborns, you had problems with the lessons your father has given you, you are lazy, not very smart, you had wizarding pox recently, your wand is not compatible with you, you left leg is in pain... Oh, and you are here because your father asked you to befriend me."

"Wha... Me... How?"

Harry sighed.

"I've studied profiles of Death Eaters since they may want to cause some problems to me. And you're looking exactly like your father except a little disproportion of the skull - it looks like your brain

is proportionally smaller. Besides you have a monogram DSM on your sleeve. And some parts of your clothes made in Slytherin colors like you plan to end in that house.

I know your father trained you to hate muggleborns and I saw how you'd be looked at Hermione. Purebloods traditions say that father should train his son, and I doubt you was very successful because of brains problem. I saw you in the Alley, your wand was bought by your mother, so the wand compatibility problems. You have poxmarks on your neck and scratch on your leg. Scratch is looking exactly like one your trunk may give you. It proves that you're not too smart 'cause as pureblood you should know you could use Leviosa, the platform and the train are considered school places. Or you don't know the spell yet, it proves again your problems with lessons and laziness. And I don't think there may be any other reason for your coming here and trying to be civil unless your father asked you."

Malfoy looked like his brains were burned. Then smashed, fried and thrown out of the window.

"Oh, and I think you should take one more first name, Barfius for example, your monogram will look complete with four letters..." said Harry and turned the page of the book...

Omake: The Stone

"Harry," Hermione cried in relief. "You've got to hurry."

"I do, do I?"

"It's Snape," Hermione explained. "He's going after the stone."

"Do tell."

"Why are you being so calm?" Hermione demanded.

"The situation has been handled," Harry replied. "Aside from that, the stone never was in any danger."

"What?" Hermione squawked.

"Dumbledore was keeping the stone in his office," Harry said mildly. "The stone you're worried about is merely a . . . hmmm, trap is the wrong word so . . . test, yes that stone is part of a test."

"A test?" Hermione asked dumbly.

"Yes," Harry agreed. "The final exam to make sure that a few clandestine lessons were understood. Piss poor job he did of it but I'm afraid that our Headmaster has yet to learn that no plan survives first contact with the enemy."

"Dumbledore?"

"Yes, I'm afraid that he's been attempting to manipulate events. From what I understand of his plan, he'd intended for Hagrid to pick me up with a short side trip to pick up the 'stone' at Gringotts. Then I'd befriend Weasley, he'd drop a few clues and before you know it I'd be facing the thief. It was a rather elegant plan, complicated but elegant. The mark of an armchair strategist, they come up with the most elegant and complex plans and then they're shocked when nothing seems to go right."

"That's why he hired Snape," Hermione said with dawning comprehension. "To be the last test."

"Possibly," Harry agreed. "But I'm afraid that the Thief is not Snape. Good deduction though, I believe that I can see the chain of evidence that led you to that conclusion."

"If it's not Snape then who?"

"Come now Hermione," Harry said with a smile. "You can do it."

"I don't . . . wait." Hermione closed her eyes and her lips moved. "Quirrell?"



"Is that a question or a statement?"

"A statement," Hermione said quickly. "I just couldn't believe that Cowardly Q was our thief."

"Cowardly Q?"

"It's what some of the girls call him," Hermione explained with a blush.

"Do they have a name for me?" Harry asked with mild interest.

"Several," Hermione agreed with a blush. "How did you know it was Quirrell?"

"The same way you did. It wasn't hard," Harry said calmly. "I believe that several of the Professors figured it out."

"Who?"

"Snape and Dumbledore certainly," Harry said. "Possibly Sprout and McGonagall, not sure about the others."

"So what do we do now?"

"I was planning to do a bit of reading in front of the fire," Harry replied. "You are welcome to join me if you wish."

"So you're not going to do anything about the theft?"

"There's no stone to steal," Harry replied with a shrug. "Why should I risk myself?"

"But it's your chance to catch . . ."

"The traps I set should be more than sufficient," Harry said with a smile, "here."

"Plutarch?"

"I thought you might enjoy it," Harry explained.

"Thank you Harry," Hermione said as she settled next to him on the chair. "So what do you think Dumbledore will do about the stone?"

"I imagine he'll panic when he finds it missing," Harry said without missing a beat.

"But you said it was a fake?"

"No I said the one behind the traps was a fake," Harry corrected. "It seems that someone took the opportunity the Headmaster's absence afforded them to make off with the real stone . . . tragic."

"Oh . . . Harry?"

"Yes Hermione?"

"If I ever end up on the other side, you'll tell me right?"

"Other side of what?"

"The side you're not on," the girl said. "Promise you'll tell me?"

"Why?"

"So I can switch and join yours," the girl giggled.

"Very well."

Omake by dogbertcarroll

Hmmm. Dudley learning to be the muscle and reaping the benefits of being associated with his cousin. I can just see Harry being forced to go to Hogwarts, he dislikes magic's lack of logic, and Dudley insisting he gets to go too. Harry goes to classes and Dudley spends most of his time doing work with Hagrid as a sort of vocational training.

"Here, Lad, drink this." Hagrid said, handing a vial of reddish gold fluid to the chubby (Exercise running after Harry's wild cases had really thinned him a bit) young boy.

Dudley downed the vial making faces and shivering as steam shot out his ears. "What the soddin' hell was that?!"

"Rem's blood. It gives you the strength and toughness of ten men or more. I figure you'd need something like that for we start classes and training. Of course the ministry's got it regulated and such, but my cousin Bubba got me some from a guy he knows. Best not to say anything."

A few more of my omake, not related to the story at all.

Omake: Time

"Yes?" Hermione opened the door to find an old man standing on her doorstep.

"Excuse me," the old man said with a smile. "But would a woman named Hermione Granger happen to live here?"

"Yes," Hermione agreed slowly. "Why do you wish to speak with her?"

"I'm here to fulfill a promise to a man I can never repay," the old man explained. "Could you get her please?"

"What sort of promise?" Hermione persisted.

"I'm here to tell her a story," the old man sighed. "It's . . . it's a story of something that happened many years ago in a terrible place called Vught."

"I'm Hermione," she said with her hand on her wand.

"Are you perhaps named after your grandmother?" The old man asked gently.

"No . . . why?"

"Curious," the old man said with an odd look on his face. "But I'm not here to ask questions, may I come in? Or at least sit down somewhere? I'm afraid that I can't stay so long as could in my youth."

"Yes of course," Hermione agreed. She slowly backed in and waved the old man towards a chair. "Now what's this all about?"

"Germany invaded Holland on the tenth of may, nineteen forty . . . we gave up after just six days of fighting." He began, his eyes glazed as he continued talking. "I was a student at the time and being young and immortal, I joined the Resistance to drive the bastards out of my country."

"Go on," Hermione prompted the man.

"It was great," the old man laughed. "Scary as hell but I always had the feeling that I was doing something important, I suppose I was . . . least until I got caught and sent to Vught where I met a man named Harry Potter."

"What?" Hermione gasped.

"Know that name do you?" The old man asked in surprise. "Good, if I had my way it'd be taught to every school child. Harry was in interesting fellow, never talked about himself but most of us assumed that he was a British agent. We couldn't figure out why else he was in with the rest of us and we couldn't figure out why else the guards were so interested in him . . . it . . . it was ugly what they did to him."

"Did to him?" Hermione asked sickly. This couldn't be real, she told herself. It had to be some sort of sick joke.

"Harry . . . I don't want to get too detailed but Harry didn't so much as whimper when they did things that would have broken me . . . would have had me spill everything I know to get them to stop," the old man said slowly. "He'd laugh and tell them that he'd been worked over by the best and that they were children compared to someone he called Tom." The old man licked his lips. "Our chance came when they started transferring the prisoners to Sachsenhausen, Harry gathered a group of us together and slipped out . . . don't know how he managed it but he got us away and wished us luck."

"And then?"

"And then the crazy bastard went back," the old man said with a look of wonder on his face. "I don't know what he was thinking, maybe he was going to try to free other prisoners . . . it's the kind of man he was. Before he went, he made us promise to come here on this day to tell

Hermione Granger everything that happened. There are still three of the six men he saved that day living today and I'm the one that was chosen to come. I don't know who you are or how Harry knew you'd be here but that's my story."

"What happened to Harry?"

"I don't know," the old man admitted. "I tried to find him after the war but I could never so much as find a trace that he ever existed . . . not even sure if that was his real name. Several of the guards were executed by parties unknown the day we escaped . . . I like to think that Harry rescued as many people as he could before bringing vengeance to our tormentors . . . I don't know, I'm sorry I wish I did."

"Th . . . thank you," Hermione's voice wavered as she showed the old man out. "I don't mean to be rude but I need to check something."

"It's fine," the old man said quickly. "I need to get home anyway."

AN: Wanted to write more of this but . . .

Omake: Where's Crooky?

Harry staggered into the common room holding a broken beaters bat and covered with festering wounds.

"What happened to you mate?" Ron asked.

"Voldemort sent a demon to kill me in the locker room after practice," Harry replied breathlessly. "Damn thing almost got me but I think I managed to drown the bugger in one of the toilets."

"What'd it look like?"

"Unspeakably ugly," Harry said with a shudder. "It had a squashed in face and it was mostly bald except for a couple tufts of orange fur."

"Good going mate," Ron cheered. "I . . ." He cut off when Hermione came down the stairs and into the common room. "Guess what Harry did Herms?"

"I don't have time for that right now," Hermione replied. "I need to find Crookshanks."

"He'll turn up," Ron said with a shrug.

"You don't understand," Hermione said. "He rolled around in . . . well, I think it was tar."

"So?"

"So the easiest way to get it out was to shave him and then re-grow his hair and he escaped," Hermione growled. "Ooooh when I find him he is in so much trouble."

"Did you check the locker rooms?" Ron asked.

"No I didn't," Hermione said brightly. "Thanks Ron."

"You're fucked mate," Ron said after Hermione had left the common room. "Pushed in face, tufts of orange hair, you're fucked royally and with a sandpaper condom."

"You're the one that always hated him," Harry replied. "Trying to frame poor Harry huh?"

"I don't look like I was in a fight," Ron pointed out smugly.

"We can fix that," Harry said as he balled his fist.

Hermione returned a few minutes later to find her two best friends pummeling the hell out of each other.

"Just what do you to think you are doing?" Hermione demanded.

"Harry started it," Ron screamed.

"Forget all that," Hermione sighed. "You'll never guess what I found in the locker rooms."

"Harry did it," Ron squealed. "Harry killed that unholy demon, I had nothing to do with it, nothing I tells you."

"Is that true Harry?" Hermione turned to him with a frown. "How'd you do it?"

"Afraid so," Harry agreed. "First I used my fists, then I used a bat, then I finally drowned it in one of the toilets."

"Oh Harry." Hermione's face scrunched up and she took a couple halting steps towards him. "Thank you," she sobbed as she threw herself into his arms. "Oh it was so horrible, I never thought I'd see a Grrrr'ash'kno'kk demon in real life. It had Crooky locked up and it looked like it was going to sacrifice and eat him." She buried her face in his chest. "But you saved my Crooky."

"Uh . . ." Harry looked at the shrugging Ron. "Good?"

Disclaimer: 'Freedom means responsibility and that is why most men shun it.'

-George Bernard Shaw

Knobkerrie

Harry returned to the bar five days later with a couple new scars and a sour disposition. "Scotch, single malt with a splash of water."

"Ow'd it go?" The bartender asked.

"Terrible," Harry groaned. "I got to the village and hired a tracker no problem."

"And then?"

"Then he starts moaning about how it'd be nice to get some meat so I says to myself, better to see if he knows his stuff now then when I'm ten days into the bush. Sides, the bugger had a point and extra biltong never hurt anyone."

"Sensible."

"So we go out and right off my new man spots a track, spent four hours following it and another two on the stalk."

"Nothing?"

"Nah, good sized Dagga Boy. So I put one into his shoulder, honesty compels me to admit that I flubbed the shot. It was fatal but not right away if you catch my drift."

"Charged?"

"Drooled blood on my boots," Harry laughed. "So I turn to my tracker . . . then I figure, maybe he was on my left and I turn to my left . . ."

"Ran off did he?"

"And left me to deal with everything on my own," Harry agreed. "So I head back to the village to hire a new tracker and I picked one up



easy. Not so good as my first but I had high hopes . . .” Harry trailed off.

“Didn't work out then?”

“Just don't understand why everyone's so bloody frightened of snakes,” Harry sighed. “So I go back to try to hire a fourth tracker . . . nothing, go on to the next village . . . nothing. To hear these guys tell it, none of them know the difference between a train track and a Ndlovo. Porters I can find, as many as I want. Cooks, skinners, sure. But to listen to these guys, not a tracker to be found.”

“Gonna giv up th'show then?”

“Nah,” Harry laughed. “Jus gonna give up the trackers. They're impossible to find and flighty besides.”

“So what're ya'gonna do?”

“You know where I can find a blacksmith?” Harry asked with a cheeky grin.

IIIIIIIIII

“You need what?” Fred asked dully.

“A name plate that says 'Iron Headmaster' and make it tasteful,” Minerva said. “I'll also need it to be indestructible and be charmed to return to a set location . . . be sure to use top quality spellwork, I don't want it to be broken easily.”

“That'll be expensive,” George demurred. “But why don't you just tell us the effect you want and we'll see if we can't give you the same effect for less work.”

“We are professionals Professor,” Fred said with a smug grin. “Trust us.”

“I'd like to put it on the Headmaster's desk,” Minerva said slowly. “And I'd like it to stay there.”

"We can't do spellwork on something good enough so that the Headmaster won't be able to change it," George said reluctantly.

"Maybe if we got Bill's help," Fred mused.

"So you can't do it," Minerva sighed.

"We never said that," George said slyly.

"Then how?"

"If you can't out spell them-

"- out think them."

"Don't worry Professor-

"- we've got you covered."

IIIIIIII

Harry bought a horseshoe nail from the village blacksmith and set to work. The spell work wasn't that difficult, theoretically well within Harry's abilities. After a few minutes of thinking and several hours of trial and error, Harry had what he needed. Tired of unreliable trackers who ran in terror from the slightest difficulty such as a rampaging Nundu, or something as harmless as a black mamba. Harry set about finding a way to avoid having anything to do with such fragile people, and since he didn't have twenty spare years to learn how to be a competent tracker . . .

"Point me to the nearest source of water," Harry said. He gave a satisfied grin as the nail spun on his palm until it was pointed at the village well. "Point me to the trading post . . . point me to the nearest bongo . . . the nearest dik dik." Satisfied that everything seemed to be in order, Harry got up and returned to his camp.

"We gonna do more hunting today baas?" One of the skimmers asked.

"Maybe for a bit of camp meat," Harry said. "How are we doing on that," he directed his question to the cook.

"We're good for now baas."

"Then I guess I'm not going out again," Harry replied. "Have a good night."

IIIIIIIIII

"Here we are," Dumbledore said with a satisfied smile. "Hedwig, I'd like you to meet my owl . . . Schultz."

The owl in question opened one eye and gave a weak 'hoot.' The fact that Dumbledore normally used his phoenix or one of the school owls to deliver his mail made Schultz the fattest owl in the owlery.

"Why don't I just leave things in your capable . . . uh . . . feathers," Dumbledore suggested.

'Hoot?' Hedwig gave the other owl a questioning look.

'Hoot,' Schultz replied. The owl closed his eyes, turned around, and stuck his head under his wing as if to indicate that he saw nothing, heard nothing, and above all knew nothing. No way was he going to stop living his nice quiet night just because some bearded fool wanted him to do something.

IIIIIIIIII

Harry rode into town a few weeks later on the back of a zebra and made a beeline for the bar past a number of shocked idlers.

"S'not something you see everyday," one of the men said calmly. "Didna think a bloody Z'bra uld let someone on 'is back."

"Gotta expect this sort of thing when Snake's involved," the other replied. "Weird bastard probly dinna know any better."

"What'll it be Snake?" The Bartender asked.

"Scotch," Harry said. "Single malt, with a splash of water."

"If you don't mind my asking," he began. "Ow'd ya get that zebra to allow ya ta ride it?"

"Charm," Harry said with a shrug. "Just had to get into town to have a drink after the day I just had and I didn't feel like walking so what else was I supposed to do?"

"I see . . . that bad then?"

"Not bad per say," Harry demurred. "More annoying then anything else."

"Annoying?"

"Yea, does anyone have a smaller gun? these rifles don't work too well in a cave, barrels are too long."

"Wh . . . what do you mean cave?"

"S'where the nundu's live isn't it? In a small cave you cant really set your sights to get a clear shot at its head, plus the way it curls up . . ."

"So, how did you kill it?"

"Well, the only thing i could think of that i had on hand was my knife."

"You stabbed a nundu to death? No, wait, you got close enough to it without suffocating?"

"Stabbed?" Harry laughed. "What would I do with a straight blade, no i slit its throat. Everyone here should know that the knife to carry is a knife made for slicing."

Several of the man nodded in agreement, choosing for the sake of their sanity to set the rest of the conversation aside for now.

"Then what happened?" The bartender prompted.

"Dragged the bugger out and handed it off to the men," Harry replied. "Tracked down a zebra since all we had in camp were pack donkeys, and here I am."

"Dey proolly got an' old Web for sale in the general store," one of the other men offered. "Not sure if dat's wha yer lookin fer."

"But it might be," Harry said. His arm lifted up and he downed the rest of his drink. "Thanks, guess I'll mosey on over there with dinner and head back to camp."

"Dinner?"

"The zebra," Harry explained. "Thought I'd give him a descriptive name."

"Charming him into your pot then?"

"You got it," Harry agreed. He dropped a bag of gold dust on the table. "Next rounds on me. Later all."

"Charmed a bloody zebra," the bartender laughed. "Gotta give him credit, Snake's visits are never boring."

The bar was relatively quiet for the next few weeks, well . . . relatively is a relative term since they had suffered an attack by a wounded rhino that had had the audacity to chase out all but the most serious drinkers and drink one of the whiskey barrels dry. Current thought was that it was either a very impolite animagus, or all Snakebite's fault. The current attention was devoted to a strenuous argument between two of the old timers on the merits of a pith helmet verses a fedora.

"A pith helmet is for the Purebloods and new-folk. They think it keeps them safe. The old timers know that your head is the last thing to get torn up. You either get poisoned or torn apart, either way, your head is fine. Stick with a fedora and you wont get ripped off as badly."

"I disagree," the geezer replied. "A pith has style, a pith has class, and best of all a pith feels really good if you haven't had one for a long while." The bar collectively groaned and despaired for their sanity if the other old bastard should fight his dementia long enough to muster a reply, that's why it was with mixed feelings when they saw Snake stroll through the doors with what appeared to be a nundu kitten dogging his heels.

"Scotch," The bartender said as he placed a glass in front of Harry's favorite spot.

"So, I thought nundus were supposed to be tough?" Harry frowned at the other prospector in the bar. "Ya know, hundreds of wizards working together to take it down? Ferocious killing machine that kills everything and anything it can?"

The old timers nodded, their faces ashen pale.

"So tell me, why is this damn kitten gnawing on my foot and has decided to adopt me as it's parent? And the parent, they are supposed to be dangerous. A ton and a half of big-cat, magically enhanced and

full of mean, a single bullet kills it? The damn thing almost landed on me. It's breath? Don't get me started, sure, I got a good lungful, but after throwing up a few times, I was fine? Isn't it supposed to be dangerous?"

The old timers nodded in agreement.

Harry sighed. "Bugger, well, it wasn't as dangerous as the Basilisk I killed when I was 12." He paused in thought. "Basilisks sell for a fair penny don't they? I think I may have to harvest the corpse if it hasn't decayed too badly. Even the skeleton and skin should be worth something I suppose."

The old timer nodded and then quietly toppled over backwards in a faint.

Harry shrugged and signaled for another round. "Put it on my friend here's tab."

Word soon got out. Snakebite the un-killable and his pet Nundu. Amazingly, the prices he paid for equipment took a tumble after that. After all, noone wanted to mess with a man who domesticated a Nundu and killed a Basilisk when he was 12. It just wasn't worth your life. They'd been willing to believe that the first time was a freak accident . . . well, assuming that it had happened in the first place. People had been known to . . . embellish their accounts of what had

happened for free drinks, but when the bastard had the audacity to bring proof? Well, that was something else now wasn't it?

IIIIIIII

"Ah, Severus. What news have you for me?" asked Voldemort.

Severus Snape bowed respectfully and said, "My lord, I have heard of a supplier who can provide the basilisk, nundu, and chimaera parts you require. His name is 'Snakebite' and he's in Africa."

"Excellent, begin negotiations at once," purred the dark lord.

"Of course, master. Do you wish me to abandon Hogwarts? Term starts in a week." Snape's reply was in a carefully neutral tone.

"WORMTAIL!" Voldemort hissed out. "Go to Africa, find the man called Snakebite that Severous talked about. He should be able to find the ingredients I need for this ritual and be on your best behavior. A man like him, even I respect his power."

"Yes master," Peter simpered.

Snape was quick to report back to the Order that Snakebite, one of the three most powerful wizards in the world was going to be hired by Voldemort unless the Order got to him first.

A couple days later, Harry was shaking down one of his local 'informants' for information pertaining to his next hunt.

"What are you looking for today?"

"Loud mouthed snook," Harry said to his . . . informant.

"Whatsss in it for me?"

"Nice fat juicy rat," Harry replied.

"Five ratssss."

"Two," Harry replied.

"Three," the snake said firmly. "Final offer."

"Deal," Harry agreed. "Accio rat, accio rat, accio rat."

"Sssaw a loud mouthed ssssnook on the river two daysss ago, sssouth of here."

"How far?"

"Jussst passsed the lightning sssstruck tree."

"Pleasure doing business with you," Harry said with a grin.

"Plesssure wasss all mine," the snake replied as it turned to its meal.

Two days later, Peter stumbled back to the Dark Headquarters looking much worse for wear.

"How did your meeting go Wormtail?"Voldemort demanded.

"He fed me to a poison snake master," Peter simpered. "I barely got away with my life."

"That just shows him to be a man of good taste," Voldemort growled. "CRUCIO."

IIIIIIIIII

"Have you seen Harry Ron?" Hermione asked as the redhead stepped into the compartment. "I didn't see him on the platform earlier and I was the first one on the train."

"Haven't seen him," Ron replied. "I wouldn't worry, they would have told us if there was something wrong."

"Yeah," Hermione agreed reluctantly. "I guess . . . did you do anything interesting this summer?"

"Nah," Ron said with a shrug. "You?"

"Nothing much," Hermione sighed. After a couple more aborted attempts to start a conversation, the two shrugged at each other and



Hermione turned back to her book while Ron choose to close his eyes and drift off to sleep.

"Ron wake up," Hermione's scream dragged Ron back to wakefulness.

"Wha?"

"The train is moving," Hermione said with a worried frown.

"So?"

"So Harry's not on it," Hermione explained.

"Probably went to school with the Order," Ron yawned. "For security reasons or something."

"I guess . . ." Hermione said slowly. "Sorry for waking you Ron."

"Don't worry about it," Ron said as he closed his eyes. "Wake me when the snack cart comes by."

"M'ok," Hermione agreed.

The train rolled into Hogwarts' station and the two friends made their way to the castle. They hadn't been at their table more then two minutes before being confronted by their worried Head of House.

"And where is Mr. Potter?" McGonagall asked with a stern frown.

"We haven't seen him since last year Professor," Hermione replied. "He's not here?"

"No . . . he's not," Minerva said with a pinched frown. "I'm going to go see if I can't find out what's going on." Contrary to what she'd said, Minerva didn't manage to have a quiet talk with the Headmaster until after the students had been sent to their beds.

"Albus," Minerva called as she rushed into his office. "Mr. Potter was not on the Express."

"That explains the note I just got," Dumbledore mumbled.

*To whom it may concern,*

*Not gonna come back any time soon, find a new hobby.*

*H.J. Potter*

"What can you tell us about this Severus?"

"Paper was made roughly out of the skin of a muggle animal called a bongo," Snape began. "The ink . . . now the ink is interesting."

"How so?"

"Because it proves that dunder head never had any talent in potions," Snape replied. "Any second year student could have recognized the plant this came from as being a valuable potions ingredient. Potter wasted a rare and valuable root to write his little note."

"Also from Africa I presume?"

"Correct Albus."

"So Harry's in Africa?" Minerva asked, her face tightening in worry.

"That remains to be seen," Dumbledore said thoughtfully. "It's equally likely that this is a ruse to throw us off track."

"What do you suggest?"

"I suggest that we release his owl," Dumbledore said with a smile, "then we can follow her to the poor lost and above all misguided young boy."

With nods all around, they set off to the owlery.

Hedwig was not having a good month, her vacation had been ruined by the selfish long bearded bastard. Sure she'd spent most of the summer escaping her cage and causing all sorts of mayhem around the school along with an assortment of odd characters including a fast talking owl from the east end, a sleezy looking French owl that belonged Fleur, and even an owl from America. But it wasn't the same as what she'd had planned.

"Are you sure this will work Albus?" Minerva asked for the hundredth time as they walked into the owlery.

"Positive," Dumbledore answered for the hundredth time. "Now we just have to wait until Moody and Nymphadora get here and . . ."

"Don't call me that," Tonks growled as she walked in.

"Excellent," Dumbledore said as he threw open Hedwig's prison. "Follow that bird."

Hedwig led them on a merry chase, seeming to delight in putting as many swamps and patches of brambles in their path as she possibly could. So it was with a very deep sense of satisfaction that they saw the owl end her journey by flying into Harry's open bedroom window on number four Privvy drive.

They burst into the house and stormed up the stairs, sure that they were rescuing the poor boy from durance vile. Tonks almost gagged at the smell of owl droppings and partially decayed rodents after she burst through the door.

"Harry?"

"He isn't here lass," Moody said in a gravelly voice. "And judging from the number of pellets on the ground, he left a day or so after he got here."

"What do you mean?"

"About a weeks worth of pellets," Moody explained. "And Albus grabbed that bird of his a week and a half after the school year ended. Not sure about you but I'd bet Galleons to gold that the boy would have cleaned that up if he were here." Tails between their legs, they returned to Hogwarts to share the bad news.

"You mean to tell me that Harry has been gone the entire summer and no one noticed?" Minerva thundered. She was less then amused when she heard the news. "You told me he was safe Albus." It came out like an accusation.

"The Order . . ."

"Is evidently filled with a lot of layabouts," Minerva sniffed. "How could you Albus? I trusted you with Harry's safety and this is what you do."

"We can still follow that lead to Africa," Albus tried to mollify the irate woman.

"Fine," Minerva agreed. "Let's go."

"Now?"

"If I know Harry Potter," Minerva growled. "Every second we waste puts him deeper and deeper in mortal peril. Unless you want me to put you in mortal peril, you will assemble the Order and we will go to Africa to look for him as soon as possible."

"Do what you can to narrow the search area Severus," Dumbledore said unhappily.

"Hmph," Minerva said as she stormed off.

As it so happened, down in the deepest heart of Africa, Harry Potter was in mortal peril.

"Come on," Harry waved his hand at the growling Hyena. "You want some of this?" He'd committed one of the mortal sins of traveling in dangerous country, he'd gone out late at night to answer the call of nature and he'd neglected to bring a weapon. Harry dodged the animal's clumsy leap and planted his boot in the beast's testicles. The Hyena seemed to shift in mid air and what landed was a human in a loincloth clutching a spear. The man dropped his spear as he leapt to his feet and began running away. "Lesson learned," Harry mumbled as he snatched up the abandoned spear. "Never leave camp without a rifle." A scream and a gurgle rewarded his efforts and after buttoning up, he returned to camp to resume his rest.

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The Order arrived in the small trading post late the next day and Minerva grabbed the first local she found and put him to the question.

"Excuse me young man," McGonagall said. "But I was hoping you could help us find someone?"

"Who?"

"A boy named Harry Potter," Minerva said. "Green eyes, messy black hair?"

"Never heard of 'im," the man replied. "But you should probably ask Snakebite, he knows most people out here."

"Well, where can I find this Mister . . . Snakebite?" Minerva asked slowly, remembering the name from an Order meeting a week before.

"Eh? E's probably out in the bush, might be back in a week or a month. Less of course he buys it fore then."

"Spread out," Minerva ordered. "Find out whatever you can about this Mister Snakebite."

"Minerva I'm in charge of the . . ." Albus cut off when the aforementioned woman hissed at him and bared her fangs like she would have in her animagus form. "On second thought, why don't you take it from here," he finished weakly.

"Hestia check out that bar, Tonks go talk to those disreputable looking men . . . show them a bit of cleavage if you think it'll loosen their tongues."

"Yes Professor," the two woman agreed quickly.

"You," Minerva turned to Dumbledore with a scowl. "You get the rest of the Order here right bloody now or I'll find out if the phrase 'pull your head out of your ass' is just an expression or if it's anatomically possible."

"Yes Minerva."

"Move Albus," Minerva barked. She'd show that old fool that Minerva McGonagall was not to be messed with when the safety of one of her children was on the line.

Hestia walked into the bar and asked the bartender to share everything he knew about the mysterious man known only as . . . Snakebite. Really, she thought the dramatic pause was a bit much but it was so fun to do.

"Snakebite?" The bartender asked. "Don't know much about him and since union regs prevent me from sharing what I know without a hefty bribe . . . ahem . . . without a hefty bribe . . ."

"Oh for heavens sake," Hestia sighed. "Is this enough?"

"Well, I think he's muggleborn. Not sure really, but he doesn't hold himself like a pureblood. He doesn't say much about himself but you don't just pick up the reflexes he has overnight," the bartender mused. "He grew up dealing with dangerous situations and he's comfortable in the bush, probably comes from RSA or Zim . . . might have a PH or two in his family. Other than that, well . . . your guess is as good as mine . . ."

"That's it?"

"Oh . . . right, he prefers dark beer and he always has a scotch with a splash of water in it after he gets in. Hope that might be of some help."

"Lots," Hestia said sarcastically. "Thanks."

"No problem lass," he said with a grin. She really should have took more notice of the word 'hefty' if she wanted more information.

Across the street, Tonks was doing the same thing except she'd taken the time to unbutton the top few buttons of her shirt and arch her back a bit before she asked.

"They say he cant be killed" One of the collectors nodded to Tonks, his eyes fixed on her cleavage, which was lightly coated with sweat due to the heat. "He's got a tame Nundu, has faced down Basilisks and angry tribesman. Word has it that he's the grandson of Alan Quartermain, or maybe his son. Africa wont let him die. But don't believe that superstitious claptrap. He's just too mean to die. I went out with him once, only a short trip, a week to gather some Demiguise

shedding. We'd had horrible luck with gear breaking and equipment going missing. Not to mention the guides getting spooked, till he walked up to this clump of bushes and punched out the Demiguise we never even knew was there. One punch and knocked it cold. He shaved the beast and then told us we were leaving. Well, I wasn't going to argue with someone who has a necklace made from the teeth of snakes that have bitten him. Got a lot of teeth on it he does."

AN: Scenes by Pelel, Finbar, and ubereng were included in this chapter. Hope I didn't miss anyone. Been getting a lot of requests for more of this lately, thought I'd throw something together and post it.

Omake: Why?

"What brought you out here Snake?" One of the other hunters asked. "Fame, fortune?"

"Freedom," Harry replied immediately. "The more 'civilization' a place has, the less freedom you'll find. Here I've got the freedom to come and go as I wish, the freedom to shoot game, the freedom to live . . . and for some, freedom is the choice of how they die. . What more could a man ask for?"

Omake: Just Because . . .

"You thought I left because of the prophecy?" Harry asked incredulously. "Something that came from that fraud, it never occurred to you that it might just be a little bit too convenient that she gave it during a job interview to become the Divinations Professor? Soon as I found out who made it I realized that my chances of having to deal with Voldemort myself ranked up there with the Cannons taking the title."

"If not that then . . . the death of Sirius?" Dumbledore ventured.

"While regrettable," Harry sighed. "I never really got to know the man. I feel bad about his death but I'm not about to sink into a deep depression because of it."

Omake by Sergey Tsvetkov

"Have you ever tasted a ferret?"

"Ferrettss... Halfs of Affricass for a ferret..." Mamba's eyes looked like glass.

"Well, I think I could try to import one. Good looking - for a ferret, properly inbred."

"Wasss it fed properssssly?.."

"Of course, I wouldn't offer you underfed animal".

Half an hour later Harry was writing a letter to twins:

"...Sorry that I didn't tell you earlier, but you weren't at the school and then... But now I have thought of it and started to worry. You know, Malfoy looked at Ginny all the time and things he had said to her... If I was not distracted at the moment, I'd killed him myself...

...And after you take the photos send the ferret to me - alive..."

Omake by Fenris

In a town filled with Wizarding iconoclasts it was pretty much an iron-clad guarantee that every kind of Character found in the Magical world was in residence at one time or another, leading the local population to developing a reputation for Sang-Froid that was the envy of the most jaded Libertines ever to sip Absinthe in the Folies-Bergere. And if the general population was inured to the occasionally strange and unusual behavior of their Magical brethren, the denizens of the Safari Club were known to possess an elan several orders of magnitude greater than the town's less fractious residents.

That all being said, the fact that the person who stepped through the Club's batwing doors brought the taproom to a complete standstill should say something profound about the impact of his...personality.

Afterwards, some would claim it was his crushed velvet, fluorescent purple Bush jacket and shorts that grabbed their attention. Others claimed it was his scarlet Stovepipe hat, made from the finest beaver (granted, Beaver hats had been quite popular during the early days of



Queen Victoria's reign, but most haberdashers removed the beaver when they made the hat). Still others claimed their reactions were due to the brace of pistols carried in the gentleman's shiny black vinyl Sam Browne holster rig; very few people had the chutzpah (or the wrists) to carry Howdah pistols, whatever their stopping power.

Ultimately, the truth of the matter had very little to do with how the stranger looked, and everything to do with what he said the moment the batwings stopped flapping behind him. "I'm told that a gentleman who goes by the name 'Mr. Bite' claims to be the greatest hunter the Dark Continent has ever seen. If Mr. Bite would meet me out in the street, I'd like to give him the chance to prove that claim!" And without another word the (as far as the Safari Club members were concerned) suicidal stranger turned around and left.

A few minutes later Harry paused in the shadows just inside the doors to allow his eyes to adjust to the brighter light before stepping outside, his hand resting comfortably on the grips of the .455 Webley revolver that rode loosely in its unsnapped holster. The first things he saw were the yellowed incisors of the beaver that glared at him from atop the stranger's head. The next things he noticed were the knobby knees and pale shanks of his erstwhile challenger, especially where they disappeared into the leopard print Doc Martens that protected the stranger's feet. The beaver moved and Harry found himself staring at a smiling face with vaguely familiar, protuberant eyes. "Mr. Bite?"

"Just 'Snake' will do," Harry replied with a small smirk. "I'm only Mr. Bite to my enemies...the dead ones, that is."

The stranger shook his head vigorously, earning an angry chatter from his hat. "Dear me, that wouldn't do at all; we can hardly do business if I'm dead, and it would distress my daughter terribly."

Harry quirked an eyebrow. "Are we going to be doing business together, Mr...?"

"Didn't I introduce myself? Dear me, I'm afraid I'm getting so forgetful these days...yes, I hope we'll be doing business together, especially if you live up to your reputation. My name is Lovegood, Odd Lovegood, and I'd like to track down and bring back specimens of several

extremely rare magical species that most people believe have become extinct if they ever existed at all. The first one I want you to find is the Crumple-Horned Snorkack. I'll pay 10,000 galleons for a complete skin and horn, 25,000 for a complete specimen, and 100,000 for a live Snorkack."

"It's a tempting offer," Harry admitted, attempting to humor the apparent madman, "but I'm afraid I wouldn't have the first idea where to look for a Snorkack. If I know an animal's territory I can track it down, but even I need a starting point."

"Oh, that's no problem," Lovegood replied airily, waving to someone behind him on the veranda.

A slender figure with dirty blond hair, dressed in a sapphire blue bush jacket and jodhpurs clumped towards them in a pair of metallic grey Doc Martens that laced up to her knees. Atop her head rested a familiar roaring lion's head, though now it was part of a traditional Australian Bush hat. "Hello, Snake," Luna said in her usual dreamy tone.

That's as far as I felt like taking it. Seems to me the Quibbler would have an endless use for Snake's gift for tracking down the exceedingly rare and mythical fauna...

Omake by meteoricshipyards

"You can talk to the Perfesser. He's just back from the velt with Snakebite."

McGonagall walked over to the table with the old Muggle wearing an eyepatch. He had to be 90 if he was a day.

"You're the one known as the Professor?"

His face scrunched up. "To be totally accurate, sister, they call me the 'Perfesser'. Name's Jones. My friends call me Indiana." He moved a fedora from in front of the other chair at his table.  
(add adventure story)

As they were talking a woman dressed in kaki shorts and a leather vest over two huge, er, tracks of land, burst into the bar.

"Where's Snakebite!" she asked with a British accent.

"Last I heard he was live capturing Erumpets for the San Diego zoo," Jones offered helpfully. "Pull up a chair, Laura."

"No time. Got to get to the Torch of Souls before some rich blighter gets a hold of it and uses it to take over the bloody world. Catch you next time, Indiana."

And another Omake by meteoricshipyards

"Potter! I've been searching for you for a week! Time to die!"

"Yes, yes, Malfoy. I know you've been around all week. I've been busy leaving clues to get you here on time."

"What are you talking about Potter! Why would you leave clues...AAAAAGGGGGGG!!"

"Because, Lucy, while it's busy tearing you apart, I have the time for a nice, carefully aimed shot." BLAM!

Small Omake by meteoricshipyards

"Luna! What are you doing in Africa?"

"Looking for kodachromes."

"I hate to tell you, but you're in the wrong continent. They live in the Amazon."

Another OMAKE by: meteoricshipyards

The crowd at the bar were shocked. Snake had been bringing back (alive or dead, depending on the contract) things that normally killed the most experienced hunter. But here he was, bleeding from dozen of wounds, torn up, mostly dead.

After patching him up, and giving the shaky man a good stiff drink, he said the one word that would explained everything. The one beast that even Snakebite Evans couldn't capture.

"Bassalope."

AN: For those too young to remember, the bassalope was a character on the Bloom County comic strip, half antelope and half basset hound. She had a fling with the jackrabit and had a litter of jackabassalopes, too, but they never showed up after leaving home at one day old, which is what jackabassilopes do.

Omake for Elementary by meteoricshipyards

And, along with being The Boy-Who-Detects' assistant, Dudley has gotten the literature bug, and has published a few of Harry's cases in Teen Witch.

"Dudley, I do wish you wouldn't embellish the cases when you publish our little exploits. You hide information and the endings are never that dramatic."

"Yes, Harry, but it's what the public wants."

"At least you haven't published that episode with the Sumatran rat."

"Even if I did, no one would believe me."

"True."

Disclaimer: Damn it, this wasn't what I wanted.

Harry Potter and the Accidental Harem

It all started a few months after Harry's sixth birthday . . .

"What?" Petunia shrieked.

"He needs to go to the dentist," the school nurse said calmly, "I've already set up the appointment." She may not have been able to do much for the poor boy but she could do this. Every time she'd sworn out a complaint against the Dursley family for their treatment of Harry Potter the police had taken down her information, promised to investigate the matter, and forgotten it. "Unless you'd like him to use your dentist?" She said sweetly, "just give me their number and I'll be happy to send over his records."

"No . . ." Petunia said quickly, she definitely did not want her dentist to know they had a second child living with them . . . who knows what kinds of questions that might bring up. "What is the number please?"

"Oh you don't have to take him," the nurse said calmly, "it's part of my job after all."

"You'll take him then?" Petunia asked hopefully.

"Yes, I just need your permission to do so . . . sign here please." Petunia snatched the pen out of the nurse's hand and scrawled her name on the permission slip.

"And I don't have to do anything else?"

"Not a thing," the nurse agreed cheerfully, "though I may have to get your permission to take him to a few more places . . . he's such a sickly boy."

"Not at all like my Dudders," Petunia cooed. "What do I have to sign?" Seizing her chance, the nurse placed a small stack of papers in front of the giraffe like woman. "All this?" Petunia asked sickly.

"If you don't want me to bother you about this yes," the nurse said sternly.

"And I never have to deal with any of the boy's . . . issues again?"

"Never again," she said firmly, "he'll still sleep at your home but he's got so many problems that it would not surprise me if he spent very little time there aside from that."

"Nothing contagious?"

"No . . . nothing contagious," she agreed as sweetly as she could.

"Fine," Petunia agreed, "so long as I never have to worry about this again."

Harry was terrified of going to the dentist. The entire day Dudley had been telling him about all the terrible things dentists did and while he'd normally have discounted anything that came out of the fat bastard's mouth, the other children had agreed. So it was with a profound sense of reluctance that Harry allowed the school nurse to take him to what everyone had agreed was a chamber of horrors.

"Harry," the nurse said, "this is Doctor Granger. She's going to be fixing your teeth. That's her husband there next to her, he's a dentist too. Isn't that interesting?" Harry just clung tighter to the nurse's leg, they weren't going to take him without a fight.

"Call me Jill," she said kindly, "and this is my husband Jack . . . you may have heard a story about us going up a hill." She added in a whisper, "and I have to tell you that it's all true . . . Jack is such a clumsy man."

"Really?" Harry asked, a bit less nervous.

"Really," she agreed. "Now why don't you sit in this seat and we'll take care of you."

"Okay," Harry agreed. A couple hours later Doctor Granger pronounced that she was done for the moment.

"Why don't you play with my daughter while I talk to your nurse?" Jill said as she nudged Harry into the play room.

Harry walked into the room to find a small girl with bushy hair with her nose in a book.

"Hi."

"Hi," the girl muttered.

"I'm Harry."

"Hermione," she said without looking up.

"What are you reading?"

"A history about the Romans."

"Is it interesting?"

"You want to know?" Hermione brightened. "Did you know that the Romans had indoor plumbing?"

"No."

"They also built a big wall across the island," Hermione said quickly. "I've got pictures here . . . wanna see?" She asked hopefully.

"Sure."

IIIIIIII

"What is it?" The nurse asked nervously.

"Malnutrition and the only case of scurvy I've seen in a developed country," Jill said unhappily, "the police need to be contacted."

"I've tried," the nurse said unhappily, "but the police never seem to listen."

"Maybe they'll listen to me then," Jill said with a frown, "come on. I need to document all of this."

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"Do you wanna play a game?" Hermione asked her new friend shyly.

"What game?"

"House?"

"I don't know how to play house," Harry said sadly.

"I can teach you?" She suggested hopefully.

"Okay."

"Ok first of all, I'm the mommy and you can be the daddy so we have to get married."

"How do we do that?"

"Take my hand."

|||||||

"That's that," Jill said with a sigh, "Jack could you take a look at this?"

"Certainly my sweet."

"Can you think of anything to add?"

"A GP?"

"Can you recommend a good one?" The nurse asked.

"Might be better if they weren't affiliated with us," Jack said thoughtfully, "that way we'll all be independent of each other."

Hermione and Harry were still playing when the nurse came to collect him a few hours later.

"Come on Harry," she said gently, "we need to get you something to eat before you go home."



"Can we come back?"

"We'll have to come back several times before all your teeth are fixed," she agreed with false cheerfulness.

"See you later Hermione," Harry said as he walked away.

"Bye Harry," Hermione replied. Behind her the two dentists shared a smile of their own, happy that their daughter was coming out of her shell.

Harry didn't return to the Granger Dental Clinic that week, instead the nurse took him to a Medical Doctor who poked and prodded him until the exam was over.

"Why don't you go play with my daughter?" Doctor Perks suggested. "She's in my office through that door."

A bit more confident now that he'd managed to make one friend, Harry walked into the office and introduced himself.

"I'm Harry."

"Sally-Ann."

"Do you wanna be friends?"

"Okay," she agreed, "wanna play a game?"

"Sure," Harry agreed, "I know how to play house."

"Okay."

Over the next several years, Harry became a regular fixture at the Doctor's office, the Dental Clinic, as well as several other health care places along with one Indian restraint where he befriended a pair of twin girls. While the nurse's bid to have Harry removed from the Dursley family never seemed to succeed, the increased attention caused the family to give him a bit more freedom than would have otherwise been the case. Not one of his magical 'guardians' noticed a single thing odd until the sorting.

Minerva smiled as she watched Lily's boy walk in with a small group of girls, first day of school and the little heart breaker had already gathered himself a harem . . . James would have been so proud. Giggling at Lily's probable reaction to that news, Minerva began calling out names.

"Brocklehurst, Mandy."

"Hmmm," the hat said thoughtfully, "haven't had one of these for a while . . . stand aside for now, I'll deal with all of you together."

Dumbledore watched with growing concern as the hat singled out every muggle born girl in that year along with Harry Potter.

"What is the meaning of this?" He demanded after the last student had been sorted.

"Difficult," the hat said thoughtfully, "I'd normally have spread them around but school regulations state that I must put them in the same house . . . I'd say you need to convene the Board of Governors."

"Why?"

"To approve the formation of another house of course," the Hat replied. "Now leave me alone, I want to go back to sleep until next year."

"What do you mean another house?"

"School regulations state that betrothed pairs must go to the same house," the hat sighed, "in the case of a multiple marriage then the group is to be sent to the most compatible house. This group has no clear majority therefore I cannot sort them, hence you must form a new house or send them to another school . . . I'm sure several would be happy to accept the Potter boy. Now let me go to sleep."

"Minerva," Dumbledore said in shock, "watch over Mr. Potter and his betrothed. I need to go use the floo."

"Yes Albus," Minerva agreed in shock. She never would have guessed that her little joke would turn out to be true. James wouldn't

have been, he'd have been dancing in the streets and Lily . . . well, actually she wasn't sure how Lily would have taken it. During her pregnancy with Harry Lily had developed an odd obsession of having as many grandchildren as possible so it was just as likely that Lily would have joined James in the streets. Poor girl never was quite right in the head after the accident. "Why don't you children sit over here," Minerva suggested, a wave of her wand transfigured a new table and benches, "while we sort everything out?"

|||||

"Have you figured out what happened Headmaster?" Lucius demanded as he stepped through the fireplace.

"As you know, magical children are warded to prevent them from making binding agreements until they've come of age?"

"Get to the point," Lucius demanded.

"We've never bothered doing that with muggle born students until after they've gotten their letters," Dumbledore admitted reluctantly, "it seems that Harry has a talent for tracking down muggle born witches and marrying them."

"Mr. Potter did not have the wards applied?"

"So it seems," Dumbledore sighed, "or perhaps the killing curse removed them. Now I don't think it will be too difficult to get the hat to resort them after we change the regulations and . . ."

"Out of the question," Lucius interrupted, "I have already arranged for one of the unused wings to be converted into student quarters."

"Lucius you can't be serious."

"No that's my wife's cousin," Lucius sneered. "I will not be responsible for altering the school regulations more then necessary.""

"Lucius be reasonable."

"The subject is closed Headmaster," Lucius said firmly, "unless you'd like me to have you placed on probation . . . the Board has granted me as much power as I wish to resolve this issue. One can't scrip when they're dealing with someone as important as the-boy-who-lived after all."

AN: Wrote this for a scene with Lucius and then when I looked over it, it didn't fit that scene. So I clipped off the end and called it good, still going to have to use that scene somewhere else. Forgot to mention this when I posted this on my group but I got the idea for this from meteoricshipyards's fic 'Luna's Hubby.'

Omake by: meteoricshipyards

Sibyl Trelawny for head of house.

"As there are only first years here, the girls will be in that dorm and you Harry will be in that one."

Harry looked in and saw a bed as big as the one Aunt Petunia and Uncle Vernon had in their room. It was much bigger than the cot he slept on.

"But if we're bonded, doesn't that mean we're married?" Hermione asked.

The strange woman's eyes crossed a bit -- it was easy to see with those thick glasses, and said, "Well, sort of, it's a bit complicated . . ."

But the complications were interrupted by Hermione saying, "Well, my mother and father are married and they sleep in the same bed."

"As do ours," one of the Patil sisters said, while her twin nodded.

"And mine," Su Li agreed.

"My mummy died when I was little," Tracy Davis said, sorrowfully. She was quickly surrounded by the rest of the house in a big group hug.

"Well, you can sleep with us, too," Hermione said in

Sibyl's "I don't think that's supposed to happen," was ignored as they whole group went into Harry's room. He looked surprised as he saw that the large bed had been replaced by a humungous bed.

At least it was big enough for all of them, he thought.

Omake by donelsenheimer: Harry and the Accidental Harem

Several weeks after Harry's first visit to the dentist, the School Nurse organized a meeting for those who had taken an interest in his care. It was held in an Indian restaurant, where Harry had befriended

twin girls his own age. While the adults compared notes and discussed strategies for improving his life, Harry and his newfound friends were allowed to play in the flat above the restaurant.

"Wanna play, Harry?" asked Hermione.

"Okay," he replied. "What game?"

"House!" said six different girls in unison.

"Erm...okay," said Harry. "Guess I'm the daddy."

"I'm the mummy!" Sally-Ann announced quickly.

"No, I'm the mummy," said Hermione. "You can be the baby."

"No way, I said it first."

As the girls all expressed their desire to be the mummy, Harry frowned. He didn't want to make any of his new friends unhappy.

"Stop!" yelled Padma, one of the twin girls. "When we play house in our house," she noted, "Harry is the daddy, and my sister and I are both mummies."

"Both mummies?" asked Mandy. "How does that work?"

Padma shrugged her shoulders. "First Harry marries my sister, and then he marries me. And then we sleep in the same bed and both have babies with Harry."

"Can you do that?" asked Sue-Ann.

Padma nodded. "It's called pig-amy."

"You mean polygamy," Hermione informed everyone. "Like when a Sultan has a harem in Arabia."

"But we live in England," noted Mandy.

Padma thought for a moment. "So, what if...instead of house, we play harem?"

Harry smiled. "I wanna play that game."

Couple more unrelated Omake by me:

Omake: Marriage Law

"It simply can't be true," Hermione said with a superior attitude, "what idiot would believe that the Ministry would force us to marry ."

"I saw it in Snape's head," Harry said sickly, "it was horrible. Dumbledore planned it so that it would build greater understanding or some such rot."

"Well?"

"Well what?"

"Did you see who was going to marry who?"

"They've charmed the sorting hat to do it for them," Harry said as he paced the room, "I didn't see every match."

"Which ones did you see?" Lavender demanded, "this is important stuff Harry."

"You're with Ron," Harry said absently.

"Oh?" Lavender gave Ron a critical look, "I could do better."

"Doesn't sound so bad," Ron muttered, eyes locked on Lav's impressive attributes. "You're certainly very . . . healthy."

"What about me?" Hermione asked.

"You along with Padma, Parvati, and Ginny are all in Malfoy's harem."

"What?" Hermione looked ready to vomit.

"I think there were a few more but I'm not sure," Harry continued. "But that's not the worse part."

"What can be worse then being in Malfoy's harem?" Hermione screamed.

"Being in Snape's," Harry replied coldly.

"You mean?"

"For some reason, Dumbledore and Snape think that it will resolve our differences."

"Oh god Harry . . ."

"They've already sealed off the exits, there's nothing we can do."

"Harry hold out your wand and repeat after me . . ."

"What?"

"Just do it," Hermione demanded. "Actually wait, Ginny, Parvati get your sister and any other girl that wants to get in on this."

"Hermione?"

"It's us or Snape," Hermione said sharply, "and speaking as your friend. I'm not sure if I could forgive you for picking Snape over me."

"Mate," Ron said, "I feel the same way and I don't like blokes."

"Neither do I," Harry said quickly, "but what's this all about?"

"You don't know?"

"Don't know what?"

"The hat can't force us to get married if we're already married," Hermione explained. "I hope Parvati hurries, we don't have much time."

"You don't know how much time we have," Harry pointed out.

"This is too important to worry about such things," Hermione snapped.

|||||

"How did your lessons with young Harry go?" Dumbledore asked.

"The boy's incompetent," Snape growled. "I allowed him into my mind to look at some false memories and I'd wager that the idiot still hasn't realized that he saw complete fabrications."

"What did you show him?"

"Some drek about arranged marriage," Snape said with a wave of his hand, "I let his mind fill in most of the details. I only made sure that it would be unpleasant for him . . . no doubt the boy believes he and Ms. Parkinson will soon be walking down the aisle or some such nonsense."

"Ms. Parkinson?"

"He hates Draco and I'm sure that he can think of nothing worse than taking Draco's leavings," Snape said with a wave.

|||||

"Alright everyone," Hermione said loudly. "Form an orderly circle and touch the points of your wands together, so long as everyone is touching someone's wand this should work correctly."

"And if they aren't touching?" Pansy asked nervously.



"Then we'll try again," Hermione said looking at the girl oddly, "I never would have expected to see you here?"

"Harem with Harry or where ever Dumbledore wants to put me," Pansy mocked, "hmmm . . . I wonder which I should go for? My oh my this his a hard decision."

"But what about Draco?"

"I pretend to like the bastard because it means he leaves me alone," Pansy said slowly, "and I thought you were supposed to be intelligent. Shame the rumors weren't true, on the plus side it does prove that most muggleborn aren't bright enough to last in our world."

"Pansy?" Hermione said sweetly.

"Yes Hermione?"

"Shut up or I'll break your nose."

"Now that's the Right Cross Granger we know and love," Pansy said with a relieved smile. "Let's do this thing."

IIIIIIII

"Are you sure it was wise to make Harry think that Severus?"

"What's the worst thing that could happen?" Snape asked with a laugh. "It's not like Potter is going to marry half the bloody girls in the school to escape from this faux marriage law."

"I guess you're right Severus."

IIIIIIII

Magic flashed and everyone breathed a sigh of relief, they were safe from the Minister's insane marriage laws and from Dumbledore's insane match making scheme.

"On to the wedding night," Ginny squealed.

"We don't have to do that Ginny," Hermione said with a sigh.

"Actually we do," Pansy pitched in, "if we don't then the marriage isn't valid and can be annulled . . . why else did you think I brought this case of toys and stamina potions?"

"I try not to pry into people's personal lives," Hermione said dryly, "or learn too much about their hobbies."

"Touche Granger."

AN: Couldn't think of another scene, maybe Snape pounding his head against a wall cursing the fact that he's solely responsible for the upcoming surge in the Potter Population? This came from the fact that I read about half of the first chapter in a marriage law fic, aside from running around killing everyone I thought that this was a rather nice way to handle the situation.

Omake by Swordchucks

Snape glared at the class of particularly tired looking dunderheads and snatched up the role.

"Draco Malfoy."

"Present," the ponce said, barely taking his narrowed eyes off the other students around him.

"Harry Potter"

"Present," Harry managed, well, what was left of him managed. He looked like he'd been locked in a closet with a berserk bludger. Though it must have been a happy bludger since he appeared to have a

smile permanently grafted to his face.

"Hermione... Potter."

"Present," Hermione drawled lazily. Yes, drawled.

"Pansy... Potter," Snape choked out.

"Present," the girl with the not-quite-pug-anymore face smirked back. Yes, smirked.

"Daphne... P-potter!" the Professor stuttered and didn't even wait for an answer as he continued to go down the list. "Potter, Potter, Potter, Potter... Harry Potter, what have you done!"

Omake by David Brown

"I created a false memory of myself being Potter's father. There's no way he could take it seriously."

In Potions, the next day...

"Father? Daddy? Daddy!" Harry ran across the classroom and leapt into Snape's arms. "Don't you have a potion to correct my looks? I don't want to look like that arrogant berk Potter any longer."

IIIIIIIIII

"Oi, Malfoy! You're going to tell your daddy about this?" Malfoy was hanging from the ceiling of the Chamber of Secrets above a pit filled with basilisk fangs, all pointing up. "Go ahead. My daddy can kick your daddy's arse."

Disclaimer: Riddle me this, Riddle me that, I'm afraid of the Sorting Hat. After all, it can read your thoughts and ruin your future.

## Screw History

Harry awoke with a groan, the first thing he noticed was that the world seemed larger than it once did. "It . . . worked?" He asked with an amused smile. "Wonder how old I am?" Shrugging the matter off, Harry examined his surroundings and found that he was back in his cupboard. "Be it ever so humble," he muttered as he popped the lock. According to the clock, it was a little before three in the morning so Harry figured that he had about four hours to arrange things and six before his 'loving family' woke up.

Harry ghosted up the stairs and into his Aunt and Uncle's room, a few minutes of rummaging garnered him an old fashioned hat pin from his Aunt's jewelry box and two quick thrusts between the vertebrae paralyzed two of the people that had shaped Harry into what he was.

Harry was gathered everything portable, valuable, and easily missed into a small pile. It wasn't like Petunia and Vernon were going to need it, he reasoned, and no sense letting it go to waste.

"This would have been so much easier if one of them smoked," Harry grouched to himself as he rewired an outlet. "Electrical fires take so much time to arrange." Shrugging the matter off, Harry drained the battery on the smoke detector with a small application of magic before turning to complete his task. On the other hand, he thought to himself, Dudley hasn't really done anything yet . . . sighing, he replaced the battery before sparking the fire. Why not let fate decide if the fat boy should live? He reasoned as he disappeared into the night. After all, he could always return to finish the job if Dudley became the man he had in the old timeline.

IIIIIIII

Electrical Fire Leaves Boy Orphaned, Hermione felt a wave of excitement as she read the story about the tragic deaths of the Dursleys. Harry had returned, her plan had worked, even if it was just the two of them her plan had worked.

|||||

The Magical World was not a healthy place, Harry mused as he entered the abandoned house. Two Dark Uprisings and the London Blitz had done a lot to reduce the population and as an unintended consequence, leave hundreds of un-claimed properties sitting around for anyone that chose to exploit them.

The wards on this particular house were good, Harry thought admiringly, certainly good enough to keep it from being noticed by one of the few professional wizard thieves, but not nearly good enough to stand up to Harry's careful prodding. Thanks to his chosen profession, Harry could give the best curse-breakers a run for their money, a ward like this hardly served to slow him down.

"Let's see what we have here," he said to himself as he made a slow search of the house. "A few books, a few items, but nothing really useful." With a philosophical shrug, Harry pocketed the few things that seemed worth taking before settling down for the night.

|||||

"Mummy?" Luna said in a low voice. "Mummy wake up." Hands trembling a bit, Luna grabbed her mother's wand and took a deep breath. Her entire demeanor changed as she began incanting, pouring every bit of magic she could muster into the woman's body in an attempt to stabilize her long enough to save her life. When she was done, Luna stumbled drunkenly towards the fireplace. "St. Mungos Emergency," she slurred.

"You have reached St. Mungo's Emergency Room, please state the nature of your medical emergency."

"Help me," Luna gasped before the world went dark.

|||||

Harry woke up late that day and gathered his things, long years of paranoia had taught him the value of never sleeping in the same place. After one last look around, Harry automatically reached for his

wand to cast the charms that would erase the signs that he'd ever been there.

"Damn," Harry laughed, "forgot all about that . . . guess I'm going to have to make getting a new one a priority." He bit his lip as he began to think. "Suppose I could find a house with a good potions lab," he mused, "Come to think of it, didn't someone used to keep a bottle of Polyjuice in one of their pockets? Now who was that . . . and for that matter, will they have it on them now?"

IIIIIIII

"Well?" Amelia demanded.

"Well what?" The Healer asked sourly.

"Well Selene is a friend of mine and I want to know what happened to her," Amelia growled.

"She says it was an accident," the Healer replied, "testing some sort of new spell and doesn't remember what happened after that. Would have died if someone hadn't stabilized her."

"Who?"

"An Auror of some sort would be my guess," the Healer said after a moment of thought, "some of the medical charms used are the sort taught in the Academy."

"Some?"

"Most of them are charms none of my healers have ever heard of," the Healer said with a shake of his head, "charms I didn't think were possible."

"So we've got a cross between an Auror a Healer and a spell researcher running around?" Amelia said dryly. "You know what? I'm fine with that. How's Selene's daughter doing?"

"Says she doesn't remember a think after her mummy wouldn't wake up," the Healer replied, "won't leave her mother's side."

"I guess that's understandable," Amelia sighed, "thank you."

|||||

Picking pockets is such a useful skill, Harry thought to himself, it's like the gift that keeps on giving. It hadn't been easy to find someone who habitually carried Polyjuice, especially since Harry couldn't remember who it was. Hey, you kill enough people and their faces start merging. Not like dead people are important, Harry reassured himself, it's the live ones that are dangerous. On the plus side, in addition to his new Polyjuice, Harry had also acquired a number of other potentially useful items, and enough gold for a moderately large shopping spree.

"Never let it be said that crime doesn't pay," Harry said happily, "now for the unpleasant part of my plan." He eyed the Polyjuice in disgust. "Bottoms up." After the transformation, he quickly dressed in some of the clothes that he'd looted from one of the empty houses and made his way to Knockturn Alley and the used wand shop that he hoped existed in this time.

"Can I help you?" The wizard behind the counter asked without looking up from his pornography.

"I need a wand," Harry said coldly.

"Pick one you like and bring it to the counter," the shopkeeper said as he admired the centerfold.

Harry took a few minutes to browse the shop until he found one that felt right.

"This is the one," Harry said confidently.

"Mistletoe thirteen inches, filled with the ichor of Talos . . . a very unusual combination."

"True," Harry agreed. "But one that makes it very adept at one thing?"

"What would that be?"

"Killing," Harry said simply. "Reducto." Harry really hated to be so messy, but needs must and all that. A few flicks of his new wand packed everything in the shop and a few more waves insured that a nice fire would consume everything left behind. Harry whistled happily as he walked out the back door, with any luck the fire would spread to the neighboring shops and give Knockturn Alley a bit of much needed renovation. Otherwise, well it wouldn't be too much trouble to come back to do the redecorating himself.

|||||

"Ms. Granger, Mr. Granger. Thank you both for coming."

"What's this about?"

"It's your daughter," the school admin replied, "I'm afraid that her current classes just aren't challenging enough for her. We'd like your permission to have her tested."

"Of course," Hermione's mother agreed, "what grade do you think she'll get into?"

"Well," the admin began slowly, "considering the fact that the teacher caught her reading a book on advanced physics rather than the assigned reading which was 'Mr. Toad is my MP' I'd say she'll skip quit a few of them . . . mint?"

|||||

Grave-robbing is such a distasteful term, Harry thought to himself as he excavated the Riddle family cemetery. What is it that separates this from the noble Gringotts employees that loot the tombs of Egyptian kings? The time perhaps? Harry wondered, or perhaps because Egyptians were a bunch of Wogs that didn't deserve to keep what they couldn't hold?

"Another ring," Harry said in delight after he'd pried open the coffin belonging to one of Tom's distant ancestors. "Must be my lucky day." A couple quick flicks of his wand destroyed the bones and Harry put a reasonable copy in their place. After all, it wouldn't do to destroy the



'Bone-of-Father' just to find out later that a 'Bone-of-Distant-Cousin' would do just as well, better to be thorough.

IIIIIIII

"Aunt Amelia, Aunt Amelia," Susan squealed when her Aunt got home. "Look, we got a letter."

"You didn't touch it did you?" Amelia asked in concern.

"Nope," Susan agreed, "just like you taught me." And let me tell you what a pain it was to find one of your spare wands and remove all the evidence that would disprove that statement, she thought to herself. "What is it?"

"Seems to be safe," Amelia muttered to herself, "it . . . it looks like a page full of new spells," Amelia said in shock, "including a couple of new healing spells."

"Who sent it?"

"There's no signature," Amelia said with a smile, "but there is a smudge of black ink."

"Oh." She hadn't noticed that.

"Go wash your hands and get ready for dinner while I look over Mr. Black Ink's letter okay Susan?"

"Okay Aunty Amelia," Susan agreed cheerfully. Well, she thought to herself, that was unexpected.

IIIIIIII

Harry crawled through two hundred feet of what had to be the third nastiest muck he'd had to go through in his life. It was worth it, he told himself as he tried not to gag, worth it because it would remove one of the major players that had made the old world as bad as it did.

A few quick stunners insured that the elves wouldn't interfere and a quick floo call to the Department of Magical Law Enforcement insured

that all the guests would arrive on time. While he waited, Harry amused himself by removing some of the more valuable items in the house . . . it wasn't like anyone would be around to miss them. Waste not want not.

IIIIIIII

Lucius Malfoy was awakened by a loud pounding coming from his front door. Throwing on his robe, he walked down the stairs and opened the door to see one of the more annoying people he had the misfortune to regularly interact with.

"What's this all about Amelia?" Lucius asked in a silky voice.

"We've received a credible tip that you've got a cache of Dark Artifacts hidden under your drawing room floor," Amelia replied briskly.

"Well I'm afraid that I have to admit that I do have some . . . questionable items," Lucius oozed. "They're all in the nature of family heirlooms, quite legal to own so long as they are properly stored and not misused."

"I'll be the judge of what's legal," Amelia hissed. "Aurors."

Lucius sighed as he watched the Aurors undo months of work, idly wondering what it would cost him to buy another pardon. Perhaps he would pay the extra charge to have the Aurors disbarred for planting evidence against him, he mused. It would be amusing to see the Bones Bitch put in her place. Yes, he decided, he would pay the extra amount.

"Reducto," a voice whispered from behind and Lucius watched in horror as the spell flew past him and destroyed the face of one of his old colleagues.

"Shit," Amelia screamed. "Get him." Lucius didn't even have a chance to protest his innocence before his body was hit by several dozen restricted spells, the war hadn't been over long and some people had very long memories. "Check 'im."

"He's dead Amelia," one of the Aurors said with a satisfied grin.

“And Perkins?”

“Dead too.”

“Shame,” Amelia sighed. “Find the rest of the family, I want them all in custody now.”

|||||||

Harry allowed himself a brief moment of satisfaction as he left the former Malfoy Manor, three Malfoys and one traitor wasn't too bad. Sure he'd had times where he'd done better, considerably better, but that was in the past . . . future . . . whatever. The point was, that it was an impressive job for someone at his age. Now all he wanted to do is find a nice hot shower, cleaning charms were all well and good but they never really made you feel as clean as good old soap and water.

|||||||

“We found the other Malfoys Amelia,” the Auror called out. “It's ugly.”

“What happened?” Amelia called back as she walked towards the scene.

“Looks like the mother smothered her son with a pillow before offing herself,” he said professionally. “Must have heard the fight downstairs.”

“Why'd she do it?” Amelia asked herself. “The most we could have done is . . . guess it doesn't matter, tag them and bag them.”

“You want us to continue the search?”

“Leave no stone unturned,” Amelia agreed. “No sense wasting a perfectly good warrant.”

|||||||

Dumbledore frowned as he read the paper, shame about the Dursley family but so long as the boy's cousin survived then all would be well.

He smiled as he read that Dudley would be taken in by his Aunt Marge, no doubt the wards had prevented the paper from mentioning Harry. Dumbledore decided to reward himself with a lemon drop, damn he was good. The Headmaster briefly considered checking on Harry in person, checking to insure that all would be well and if necessary moving the wards to the new house.

"I'm sure it'll all work out without my hand," Dumbledore said to himself, "the wards should move on their own and the Dursley woman will probably be overjoyed to have two children dumped . . . er that is to say placed in her care." Yeah, he thought to himself, that must be right. Deciding to reward himself with another lemon drop, Dumbledore put the entire matter out of his mind.

The years passed and the body count rose, dozens of former and possible Death Eaters perished in a variety of horrific ways. There was no proof that any of these deaths could be attributed to anything that couldn't be easily explained but that didn't prevent the more astute members of society from noticing that something odd was happening.

"Over the last few years," Amelia began, "there have been a number of strange events."

"Define strange events please," one of her fellow cabinet members asked politely.

"It started when Selene Lovegood was found injured in her home," Amelia continued, "Someone had stabilized her using a number of unknown charms. Two other things happened that week, a mysterious fire burned down half of Knockturn Alley and I received the first of many letters containing strange new spells from a man I've been calling Mr. Black Ink . . . or Mister Black for short."

"Is that all?"

"That was all that happened in that week," Amelia replied, "if you expand the time frame you have the tip that led us to Lucius Malfoy . . ."

"Bad business that, loosing an Auror."

"We found the Dark Mark on his arm when we did the postmortem examination," the Chief Healer at St. Mungo's interjected. "It was thought best to keep quiet about that."

"Why would he kill a fellow Death Eater?" The Head of the DOM blurted.

"We're not sure he did," Amelia said reluctantly, "an examination of his wand did not show any combat spells cast in the last several cycles. There's also what happened to the Malfoy family. Taken alone it's strange, when you consider the fact that several other suspected Death Eaters have died under mysterious circumstances, it paints quite a different picture."

"Have any proof?" The Head of the DOM asked calmly.

"None at all," Amelia replied, "just a lot of strange events that add to something even stranger."

"We'll keep our eyes out then," the Chief Healer offered, "for any other signs of this . . . Mister Black."

"That's all I'm asking," Amelia said with a nod, "thank you."

IIIIIIIIII

Harry was sitting in a cheap hotel room in Romania watching through the window as a group of wizards below concluded a deal. If asked, he'd have to admit that he was more than a bit disappointed by what he was seeing. The men below weren't Dark Wizards, not if you took the conventional use of the term anyway. They were criminals and thugs yes, terrorists no. Harry briefly considered calling the authorities in and washing his hands of the entire business, it was none of his business what they were doing, nothing he cared about.

"Although," he mused, "that is quite a lot of money down there . . . what the hell, not a one of them was on the side of the angels. Not like I give a damn what happens to them." In a flash, Harry's spare wand appeared in his hand. "Now who wants to go first?"

"Hoot."

"How'd you get in here?" Harry muttered. "Hmmm, to Harry Potter. Grungy Romanian Flophouse. My Hogwarts letter huh?"

"Hoot." Harry wrote out a quick letter agreeing to the letter.

"Now where was I?" He said to himself as he walked back to the window. "Right, I think I'll take Mr. Beady Beard first . . . say cheese."

|||||||

"Luna what are you doing?" Selene demanded. She'd woken up early that morning and was shocked to find her daughter doing spells in the kitchen.

"Uh . . ." Luna plastered a smile on her face. "I'm trying to help with the housework mummy." She winced, that excuse even sounded weak to her.

"Really?" Selene asked with a proud smile. "How did you learn?"

"I learned by watching you," Luna said quickly. She couldn't believe this was working. "See? A couple quick flicks of her wand cleaned the dirty dishes in the sink."

"Very good Luna," Selene said proudly, "now why don't you go play with daddy? I need to make a floo call."

"Ok mummy."

"Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry," Selene said as she threw a handful of floo into the fire. "Minerva, it's so wonderful."

"What is?"

"I caught Luna using my wand earlier today," Selene replied. "Looks like I've got a prodigy on my hands. I'd like to enroll Luna a year earlier than expected."

"Are you sure?"

"She's only a few months too young as it is," Selene waved off the older woman's concerns, "and I'm afraid that I don't have the skills to teach her for a year myself."

"If you're sure," Minerva agreed, "I'll speak to Albus and set things up."

"Thank you Minerva."

"Happy to help Selene."

|||||

"Susan," Amelia called out, "come out here."

"What is it Aunt Amelia?"

"We've got a new letter from Mr. Black," Amelia said with a smile, "and more importantly your Hogwarts letter came."

"Really?"

"Really," Amelia said, "oh if only your parents were here to see this. Your mother would have been crying and your father would be so proud he'd burst . . . or the other way around. The important thing is that we need to do something special to celebrate this, would you like to go out to eat later?"

"Okay Aunt Amelia."

"And we can spend the day shopping for your school things," Amelia continued, "I'll call the office to let them know that I'm taking the day off."

After her Aunt had gone, Susan lifted up her skirt and stared at her legs for a few seconds. She was determined to keep her Aunt alive this time, keeping her ability to tap dance would be a nice bonus too.

|||||

"Excuse me," Minerva said as she walked into the office. "But there isn't a child named Hermione Granger here is there?" She knew it

had to be a mistake, what kind of child took advanced classes at one of the most prestigious universities in the country?"

"Doctor Granger?"

"This has to be a mistake," Minerva said slowly, "the girl I'm looking for is a child."

"Well, I shouldn't have said Doctor . . . not yet anyway." The receptionist said quickly. "Both of her parents are Doctors of Dentistry, she's got her masters in Physics but she hasn't finished up the PHD yet."

"She has a masters?" Minerva asked in shock. "I've got a letter here for her."

"I'll let them know that you're waiting out here," the receptionist offered, "please take a seat."

"I will thank you."

|||||

"This is odd," Dumbledore muttered to himself, "I would have thought that Harry's family would have been more difficult." He took a few minutes to mull over the information. "Perhaps Marge is more tolerant of magic than her brother and sister and law were? Yes . . . yes that must be it," Dumbledore said confidently. "I deserve another lemon drop for that brilliant piece of deduction," Dumbledore said happily, "and I must remember to send another letter to Harry explaining where and how to get his school supplies."

|||||

Harry walked into Gringotts with a cocky grin on his face and a very special coin in his pocket.

"Key?" The goblin growled.

"Don't have one," Harry said cheerfully.



"Then I can't let you in," the goblin said with a happy smile, "nex . . ."

"Not quite correct," Harry interrupted, "according to my contract I do need a key to make withdrawals."

"Then . . ."

"But not to close my accounts," Harry continued, "those will be the Potter vault, my trust vault, my parent's personal vaults, the Black vault, my godfather's personal vault, the Lestrage vault, the Lestrage personal Vaults, the Malfoy vaults, the Malfoy personal vaults, and the Gaunt and all connected vaults which are mine by right of conquest."

"What?" The goblin asked sickly.

"I'm the heir to the heir of the Black family," Harry explained, "he's in prison and as such legally dead. Everything he once had was passed to me, same situation with the Lestrage family. They're all in lock up so everything they had goes to the Black family, everything in the Black family goes to me. The Malfoys are dead, their monies and possessions go to the Black family and as you know . . ."

"Yes yes . . . would you like to supervise the transfer?" The goblin asked sourly.

"I believe I would," Harry agreed, "just think . . . I wouldn't have closed my accounts if you'd have had some way of letting me make withdrawals without a key . . . shame that." That was a lie, but they didn't know that.

"We do," the teller said quickly, "all we have . . ."

"I'm afraid that I've already made my decision," Harry said calmly.

"Griphook," the teller screamed, "take this human to supervise the procedure."

"Just transfer it all to my Swiss account." Harry twisted the knife. "The gnomes give such better interest."

"See that it's done," the teller snapped.

"Yes sir," Griphook agreed. "This way human."

Harry watched with a satisfied smile as all the gold under his control was removed from Gringotts, the goblins in general and one goblin in particular had taken advantage of their ability to limit access to gold during the war. Armies may march on their stomachs, Harry thought to himself, but wars were won and lost by gold. More gold meant more medicine, more food, more weapons. Less meant death. After all, winning a war takes almost everything you have while loosing takes it all.

"Is it rude to offer a tip?" Harry asked after the gnomes had confirmed possession of the Potter fortune?

"Not at all," Griphook said quickly.

"Here you are then," Harry passed the goblin his special coin, specially covered in contact poison. The thought that Griphook would spend the next week dyeing in horrible agony warmed Harry's heart, and the thought that some other goblin might handle the coin before the poison lost its effectiveness bothered him not at all. Griphook's conduct had been especially bad during the war, even compared with that of the other goblins.

"That's it?" Griphook looked at the Knut in his hand in disgust.

"If you'd rather I keep it . . ."

"No," Griphook said quickly.

"Alright then," Harry said. He left the bank whistling cheerfully to himself.

IIIIIIII

"Doctor Granger," Minerva felt a bit odd addressing a small child that way.

"ABD Professor," Hermione said cheerfully, "could you just call me Hermione?"

"Of course Hermione," Minerva agreed, "and you may call me Minerva when we're outside of class."

"Thank you for taking the time to escort me to Diagon Alley," Hermione said politely, "do you mind if we pick up a few extra things while we're there?"

"What sort of extra things?"

"Books mostly."

"Of course," Minerva agreed, "in fact . . . I believe I know of several Transfiguration books that might interest you. Have you ever thought of taking a Mastery in Transfiguration?"

"I'm not even sure what that is," Hermione said as convincingly as she could.

"Well from what I understand of Physics." Very little. "It will compliment your studies in Transfiguration quite well. And of course I'll always be on hand to help you with your work."

"Thank you Professor."

IIIIIIII

"Susan," Amelia called out, "come in here please."

"What is it Aunt Amelia?" Susan asked.

"Looks like you've got a package," Amelia replied, "I wanted your permission to check it for traps. I'm also going to have to open it to make sure that it's safe."

"Okay Aunt Amelia," Susan agreed.

"Hmmm." Amelia looked up with a smile. "Looks like Mr. Black Ink sent you a gift to celebrate your entry to Hogwarts."

"Really?" Susan asked in shock. She inspected the contents of the package. "It's an old Roman manuscript on spell creation."

"Guess he thinks you have the potential to follow in his footsteps," Amelia said with a pleased smile.

"Looks like it," Susan agreed. Thanks harry.

Around the country, two other girls were also opening packages from their secret admirer.

"What is it Hermione?" Her mother asked.

"It's a book on Romanian history mum," Hermione replied.

"That's nice dear."

Luna's parents were a bit more enthusiastic about her book . . .

"Look at this darling," Selene said happily, "it's a compilation of magical animals written up by scholars in the Library of Alexandria."

"I knew it," Luna's father cheered, "I knew Mug Footed Warbies wasn't just a product of my imagination."

"What do those healers know," Selene agreed disdainfully, "they're of the opinion that we're all crazy so that just goes to prove that they don't know anything."

"Right you are my love."

Luna watched happily as her parents embraced. While a normal child of her physical age would be disgusted by witnessing such an enthusiastic show of affection, Luna was anything but normal and she was also not a child. She loved to see her parents together, every time they kissed helped heal the void in her heart that had formed after the death of her mother in the old time line. Every time they hugged helped her forget her father's long downward spiral until he lost himself in grief.

IIIIIIII

Hermione was the first student to board the train and she immediately staked out her favorite car. She couldn't wait for her friends to arrive and longed more than anything to have a conversation with the three other people on earth that remembered the old world.

"Harry," Hermione said cheerfully when she walked into his compartment, "I was wondering if I'd see you."

"Wouldn't miss it," Harry replied, "there are a few loose ends I'd like to tie up here."

"Snape?"

"If the mountain won't go and all that," Harry agreed. They were joined a few minutes later by Luna and Susan.

"What are you doing here Luna?"

"Mum caught me casting spells a few months ago," Luna sighed, "and so I've been sent here a year early. It's no big deal, I was almost old enough to come this year anyway."

"S'what happens when you get complacent," Susan admonished, "so what's everyone been doing?"

"Nothing much," Harry replied. "Seeing the world, meeting strange and interesting people . . ."

"Then killing them," Hermione suggested, "yes we all know . . . and would it have killed you to visit?"

"It might have . . ."

"Why don't we all yell at Harry for being inconsiderate and not visiting any of us later," Luna suggested, "what have you been doing Hermione?"

"Nothing much," Hermione replied, "just going to school."

"You know Auntie mentioned that one of the muggleborn students had an advanced degree from Oxford," Susan mused.

"So I was bored," Hermione replied quickly, "I lasted about a week before I broke. Besides, don't think I didn't get a look at the Daily Prophet Luna."

"I'm not doing anything too noticeable, Just spending as much time as I can with mum." Luna said serenely, "they have no idea who sends in that column. Not like Susan and her spells."

"They have no idea who invents those spells either," Susan growled, "what do you mean not like Susan?"

"Hmmm?" Luna blinked. "Sorry, that was supposed to be just like Susan and her spells. Everyone should have a hobby after all."

"What spells?" Hermione asked.

"I wrote most of our first year charms books," Susan said with a shrug, "Aunty is convinced that there's an insane spell inventor wandering the earth doing good . . . oh, and killing lot's and lot's of people."

"What?"

"She's nicknamed him Mr. Black," Susan said with a giggle, "coincidentally it's the same nickname she has for another 'friend' of hers. You pick up the most mentally scarring information when you're testing new listening charms," she ended with a sigh.

"Other friend?"

"It lives in a her sock drawer," Susan explained.

"Oh."

"I don't get it," Harry said with a frown, "what kind of friend lives in a sock drawer?"

"The kind for lonely women," Hermione explained absently, "so how's everyone been doing other then that?"

"Bit odd to pretend to be a child

AN: I couldn't resist . . . just couldn't, how could you expect me to?  
Mister Black returns . . . well . . . sort of.

#### Omake: Troll in the Castle

"Troll in the Castle," a badly injured Snape screamed as he stumbled into the Great Hall, "it's right behind me."

"I thought you took care of Squirrelymort?" Hermione asked, when Harry didn't answer she turned to him and raised an eyebrow.

"I'm sentimental, sue me." Harry sighed. "Without that Troll, we might have never become friends . . . besides, I just happened to have that bottle of Troll in Heat laying around and Snape really should lock up his cologne."

"So it's trying to?"

"Yep," Harry agreed.

"Rada," the Troll screamed as he ran into the Great Hall and towards Snape.

"Professors," Dumbledore said loudly as he drew his wand, "on my mark . . . fire."

#### Omake: The Housemates

"I must say," Minerva began as she poured the tea. "That I was shocked to see you go to Slytherin rather than Ravenclaw."

"Your fault Professor," Hermione laughed, "I told the hat that I wanted to be the best Transfiguration Mistress in my generation and he had me in Slytherin before I could get in another word. The others are the same of course."

"Really?"

"Slytherin is such a small house that the Hat sends as many students to it as possible," Hermione explained, "mostly muggleborn since Purebloods have been avoiding it what with the 'curse' and all. They

see that most of the people who died in mysterious ways were mostly from Slytherin and forget that they were all supporters of the last Dark Lord. Thank you for the tea by the way."

"You're very welcome," Minerva said. She so enjoyed having a chance to speak with an equal, the fact that her guest was a young girl bothered her not at all. "Do you mind sharing why the others got in Slytherin?"

"Not at all. I'm not sure about Harry." That was a lie, Harry wanted to get conveniently close to his targets. "But Susan wants to be either an Auror or a Spell Researcher, perhaps both. And Luna wants to be the best reporter that ever lived . . . or a Zogboat."

"Zogboat?"

"I have no idea," Hermione confessed. "Luna's a rather odd girl."

"Not surprising considering who her parents are," Minerva mused.

Omake: Snape

"God damn it," Harry screamed.

"Stop sulking," Hermione said. "It's your own fault."

"It's not," Harry snapped, "and that's the problem. You try spending as much time as I have planning Snape's death and see how you like it when your plans are foiled."

"I still say that Neville deserved it," Luna said serenely, "both for what happened in the last world and for what happened in this one."

"It wouldn't have been so bad if Neville had actually done it," Harry whined, "but all he did was hand in an assignment that looked good. That's all he frigging did, Snape died because he's an idiot and because Neville somehow managed to brew an exploding potion that just happened to look and smell like a perfect hair growth potion."



"I think it works out," Susan tried to console her friend, "look at it this way. Snape died because he's a bastard, he dropped Neville's 'perfect' potion and it exploded. How were you planning to kill him?"

"Well . . . something similar," Harry admitted with a small grin.

"You see?" Susan cooed. "Snape was going to die anyway and in a similar fashion."

"But I was gonna make it slow," Harry protested.

"Were you going to do it in front of all the students on the first day of class?"

"No."

"You see, it ended up being a good lesson on safety, "Snape was never all that important anyway."

"I guess you're right," Harry sighed, "you'd think I'd have learned to deal with disappointment after the life I've lived."

"You gotta admit," Hermione said, "the look on his face when the potion exploded was priceless."

"And he did die slow," Luna said quickly, "if I'd have known that you wanted to do it your self then I wouldn't have taken an hour to get the Healer."

"How'd you explain that?"

"It's my first day," Luna said innocently, "I got lost." The group laughed at Luna's puppy eyes "I . . . didna . . . mean . . . for . . . Professor . . . Snape . . . to . . . die."

"They bought that?" Hermione demanded between giggles.

"Gave me a passing grade in all my classes till the end of the year too," Luna said proudly. "Because I've been so horribly mentally scarred."

Omake: Thrice Defied.

Snape glowered at the Frank Longbottom and his girlfriend Alice. How dare they defy him like this? He'd told them three times that stripes and plaid just weren't the right color combination to wear to the spring formal but the fashion challenged fools had ignored them.

"That's it," he said to himself. "Severus Snape the fashion consultant is no more . . . why don't we try Severus Snape the Potions master and Death Eater?"

Omake by dogbertcarroll

Harry patted Neville on the back as he stared despairingly at his potions quiz.

"I got a Troll minus. No one has ever got a Troll minus on potions before. He even took points off for the way I spell my name."

"It's not that bad. I got ahold of his old potions book and look at this." Harry held out an old and heavily folded test being used as a bookmark.

Neville unfolded it and began to snicker. "He got a Troll minus on his first one too! He marked me the same as his first one. I guess you're right, I'm not that hopeless. If Snape can go from Troll minus to

teaching then I can at least get an EE."

'And he shall mark him as his equal'

Omake by meteoricshipyards: Another conversation at the Reunion

Harry and Susan watched Luna as she went to get more drinks.

"Amazing that "Loony" Lovegood turned out to be one of the best Aurors since Mad Eye," the blond spell wight commented.

"That's just because people didn't pay attention to her. She was always so quiet in the DA that no one noticed she needed hardly any help when learning new spells, or that her aim was so good. When we

went to the Department of Mysteries, she rescued a half crazed Ron and a Ginny who was in too much pain from her broken ankle to cast a spell, and once she became responsible for them, she didn't let another spell hit them until we were all overwhelmed.

"And when she encountered that group of Junior Death Eaters. . . ."

"They were over seventeen and all marked," Susan commented.

"Yes, but there were five of them against Luna and myself. They thought I'd do anything to protect her. . . ."

"You wouldn't?"

"I would, but only if she needed it. You should have seen Parkinson's face when they found out how bloody competent "Loony" Lovegood was with a wand." Harry laughed, until he remembered what they found in the next room after defeating their former schoolmates.

Susan put an arm around him, as she saw his expression change. She knew what he was remembering, and gave him a squeeze.

"We all miss them," she whispered. Harry nodded, as Luna and Hermione also enveloped him with their arms.

Another Omake by meteoricshipyards

-Where are we?

-I don't know.

-Did it work?

-I think so.

-Everyone here?

-I am.

-Who are you? I mean we're not talking. I don't even think we're breathing.

-This is Hermione.

-I'm Luna.

-Susan here!

-That means I'm Harry. So the spell did something, we're together, but we can't tell where we are. Or when. Or if.

-But we are together.

-I feel that this place is familiar.

-Who said that?

-Hermione. I just feel warm and protected.

-I hear something.

-Me too.

-I don't recognize the noise.

-I hear a heartbeat. It's really pounding.

-Now that you mention it, so do I. And . . . gunting?

-"Bubala?" Who uses that word?

-My mother.

-Who's that?

-Hermione again. My mother calls my father that when they're alone. At night. All alone. In the bedroom.

-How do you know?

-I was a very curious child. I would listen at their door when I heard sounds in the night.

-I hear something else. Singing. Very tiny singing.

-Who said that?

-Luna. I think I can direct us. I see something. Well, see isn't quite the word, but it's close. There do you see it?

-It's tiny. And you're right. It is singing.

-Tiny? It's microscopic. It's spherical and microscopic and singing? Why doesn't that seem to make any sense.

-It's singing, "Come to me"? This isn't making any sense.

-Wait I hear something else. It's like a croud of voices?

-Yes that way.

-What way. There's no up and down here.

-That had to be Hermione.

-You want to make something of it, Potter?

-Er, I'm Susan.

-Sorry. But I hear the crowd, too.

-They're singing, too.

-What are they saying?

-Listen! "I'm coming. Got to get there first." over and over.

-There they are! Hundreds of them. Snakes!

-Oh, good lord! There're not snakes.

-What are they?

-They're sperm. And that's an egg. And I'm the oldest, so that's probably mine.

-Then that means. . . .

-I always was a bit of a voyeur, but I've never watched this.

-You pervert, Harry.

-That wasn't me.

-That was me. Luna. I wonder if we can go up. . . .

-Don't you dare! That's my parents!

-All those times listening, didn't you ever watch?

-No, they always locked the door.

-Oh, look, one's made it. They're singing a duet now.

-And the rest of the sperm is going away sad. I wish. . . .

-Don't you say it, Luna.

-Awwwww.

-So, the spell must have taken us further back than planned, right Hermione? Hermione?

-I don't think she's with us any more. I think that we're looking at her.

-So what happens now?

-I think we wait a few months and visit my parents, and then yours Harry. Luna, you're going to be like this for about a year.

-It will only be a few months after Harry. He's born in July and I'm in October.

-Do we know if this will work when we go all the way back to the beginning?

Yes.

-Someone else? Who said that?

Me. Hermione. Im in the cell. Can't talk much now. I'm getting ready to split.

-You're leaving?

No! Not split/leave. Split/divide. Talk to you later.

-I guess it worked.

Omake By: meteoricshipyards

"Harry? Did you kill those death eaters?"

"No, Hermione! I'd never!"

"Harry?"

"Well, a may have. A little."

"A little Harry?"

"Maybe a little, yeah. And it was an accident. My wand went off when I wasn't paying attention."

"Sixteen times?"

"Yes. It was an accident."

"What am I going to do with you, you goof!"

Luna piped up, "Oh Harry! You know being dark and daring makes me hot!"

Hermione turned on the blonde, "Not now, Luna . . ."

"Awwwww."

Hermine continued, ". . .We're only six. At least wait until puberty!"

"OK, it's a date!"

OMAKE by ubereng

"Damn!" Harry said. "As I was doing that last job..."

"You mean the Goyles?" Interrupted Hermione.

"Yeah," Harry replied. "Anyway, I felt all giddy and happy. Like I even wanted to hug and kiss Mrs Goyle! Yech, I mean am I finally losing it, Hermione?"

Hermione turned her head and coughed. The cough might have sounded a little like "finally?".

Luna piped up, "It's your nargles, Harry. That's what they do."

"Nargles, what nargles?"

"Your wand's crawling with them. Let me see it."

Harry pulled his mistletoe wand out of his back pocket. Luna took it and took a small jar out of her purse. "This is a pepper shaker." She sprinkled pepper along Harry's wand. Several tiny "achoos" could be heard along the length of it.

"This is insecticide," Luna said as she pulled a spray can out of her purse. Soon several tiny "aarghs" could be heard falling from Harry's wand to the carpet.

"Oh, Harry," Hermione chided. "Didn't anyone tell you not to carry your wand in your back pocket?"

Harry's tone was acid, "I'm not going to blast a buttock off!"

"Maybe not. But, certain infections can spread from there," Hermione replied as Luna pulled Harry's waistband out and sprinkled in some pepper. Several tiny "achoos" could be heard from Harry's boxers.



Disclaimer: How Harry get's off . . . er . . . that doesn't sound right does it?

Loophole

Part One: Hermione or Lies, all Lies

"Harry Potter?" A man in Auror robes asked.

"Yes?"

"Come with me," he said curtly, "you are to be charged with suspicion of illegally using magic. I'd suggest you keep your mouth shut until your trial."

"Yes sir," Harry agreed reluctantly. The next few hours were a blur as Harry was taken to the Ministry holding cells and processed. After he'd been printed and given a number, he was hustled into a small room.

"Hello Harry," Dumbledore said sadly, "bad bit of business isn't it?"

"Yes sir," Harry agreed. "There were . . ."

"I'm well aware that you defended yourself Harry," Dumbledore said with a smile, "and fear not. I believe that I have the situation well in hand."

"That's good to hear," Harry sighed.

"Until then," Dumbledore said with sparkling eyes, "I have a bit of a surprise for you."

"Ron, Hermione." Harry said in shock. "What are you two doing here?"

"Why don't I leave you three alone?" Dumbledore suggested as he left the room.

"Here to show our support mate," Ron said tightly, "it's wrong what they're doing to you. Defend yourself and you bloody get tried for it."

"Harry," Hermione began hesitantly, "do you trust me?"

"With my life," Harry agreed quickly. "Why?"

"Dumbledore is going to speak for you and try to get you off," Hermione said slowly, "I . . . I think you should ask for a delay and if they refuse to grant it then I . . . I could speak for you if you wish."

"Why not Dumbledore?" Ron asked before Harry had a chance to.

"He's a great wizard, but he's not a Barrister." Hermione replied. "He'll use his influence, I can use the law . . . I think. It's up to you Harry."

"I trust you more than I trust him," Harry said simply. "Do whatever you can."

"Thank you Harry," Hermione said gratefully, "I'm gonna need your help Ron."

"I . . ." Ron opened his mouth to object and then closed it with a nod towards Harry. "Sure Hermione."

"Ok," Hermione began. "Ask for a delay, cite section five of the Worth Goode act."

"Right," Harry agreed. It was a much calmer Harry Potter that stood in the court room facing his accusers than would have been the case in another world. "I want a delay," he said with much more confidence than he felt.

"On what grounds?" Fudge sputtered.

"Section five of the Worth Goode act," Harry replied.

"Denied."

"Then pursuant to section fifteen of the Worth Goode act we demand all charges be dropped," Hermione spoke up.

"Have that girl clapped in irons," Fudge demanded.

"According to section six paragraph three of the Holde Goodman treaty, and I quote 'every accused person is permitted to have one Witch or Wizard of good character aid them in their defense.' End quote, are you saying that I am not a Witch of good character Minister?" Hermione asked as she dodged the clumsy hands of one of the Minister's guards.

"You're just a child," Fudge protested.

"The treaty makes no mention of age," Hermione said with a smirk.

"She's right," Amelia spoke up. "Bailiff, escort Ms . . . I'm afraid I don't know your name."

"Hermione Granger, I'm in the same year as your niece Susan."

"Escort Ms. Granger to her client."

"Now then," Hermione said from Harry's side, "I demand that these chains be removed."

"I'm afraid that . . ." Amelia began.

"As they are in violation of several Ministerial decrees including the so called 'Purity Act.' Um . . . excuse me for interrupting Madame Bones."

"Not at all," Amelia said with a smile. She was having more fun watching Fudge and his pets squirm than she'd had in years. "I'll take your word on the rest, but how does it violate the purity act?"

"No un-convicted Pureblood shall be confined," Hermione replied.

"Yes but I thought Mr. Potter's mother was muggleborn?"

"She was made Pureblood by special Ministry Decree 1983-998," Hermione explained. "Which makes Harry a Pureblood as both of his parents were Pureblood."

"Release him," Amelia ordered.

"But Madame Bones," Fudge whined.

"She's right," Amelia said sharply, "unless you wish me to violate the law . . ." Left unspoken was the fact that she would violate his spleen about two seconds after he asked.

"No Madame Bones," Fudge sulked.

"Now then," Amelia turned back to the girl in front of her. "There remain the charges."

"Which should be dropped," Hermione said firmly, "as stated in the Worth Goode act. Even then the charges are without merit for two reasons; One, Harry was acting in self defense. And Two, Harry is a member of the Dark Defense League in good standing and as such he is privileged to do magic any time he wishes."

"Case dismissed then," Amelia agreed cheerfully, "the Ministry apologizes for taking up so much of Mister Potter's valuable time."

"Not at all Madame Bones," Harry said gamely.

"One more thing," Amelia said. "Ms. Granger."

"Yes Madame Bones?"

"Have you ever considered a career with Magical Law Enforcement? We could always use a Prosecutor who's isn't a sycophant."

"I'll consider it Madame Bones," Hermione said with a blush.

"See that you do."

"And Mr. Potter."

"Yes Madame Bones?"

"Members of the Dark Defense League usually go to the front of the pack when we're considering who to hire when we get a new batch of applicants."

"I'll . . . uh . . . consider it too Madame Bones."

"Good." The two children didn't have much of a chance to celebrate their victory before Dumbledore appeared.

"Very good Ms. Granger," Dumbledore said happily, "better than I could do I dare say."

"Mum always said that logic, reason, and the truth are wonderful things." Hermione said with a blush. "Unless you're dealing with the courts. There you'll find that half truths, chicanery, and outright lies will work better."

"Your Mum is a very smart woman then," Dumbledore said. "Happily, my heart nearly stopped when you stood up to speak. If it hadn't then I fear I may have done something rash to spoil your plan. Again, very well done."

"Lies?" Harry asked. "So . . ."

"Honestly Harry," Hermione said with a frown. "Do you really think I had enough time to research everything before your trial?"

AN: Just an idea. I come from a family full of lawyers, I'm sure they'd all fall over themselves screaming about how things are not done this way.

Omake by dogbertcarroll

Harry whispered to Hermione. "So, you just made a bunch of stuff up?"

"Basically. Have you read the wizarding world's legal codes? It's like reading stereo instructions. No, it's worse than that. It's like reading a sex manual written in Latin by a blind and deaf nun and translated into Russian by an irate Frenchman. And speaking of sex manuals we have yet to discuss my fee." Hermione grinned mischievously.

"And mine." Luna added.

"Your fee?" Harry asked, bewildered.

"I helped Hermione prepare her legal brief."

Hermione shrugged. "If you want to confuse someone... I figured she'd be perfect for the job."

"Yes and as her assistant, I am here to claim my ten inches."

"I thought it was ten percent." Harry mumbled.

Luna's dreamy gaze focussed on his waist for a moment with laser sharp intensity. "I always say what I mean."

SlickRCBD

"Honestly Harry, did you really think I could do all that research in just a couple hours?"

"Of course, since I know the time turner you supposedly returned was a fake, and you secretly kept the real one so you could do more studying in the restricted section while having an alibi."

Part 02: Kwikspell or The Other School

Harry walked down Diagon Alley with his thoughts whirring. Sirius Black was on the loose and it was very likely that a boy named Harry Potter was his target.

"If only I could do magic," Harry muttered to himself, "then I'd at least stand a chance." Harry continued to sulk until he came across a flier advertising the Kwikspell course, a fully accredited magic school with courses by mail. A smile bloomed on his face as Harry remembered what he'd learned about the course, perhaps things weren't so hopeless after all.

Harry was disgusted, the course was a scam and none of the spells worked and as far as he could tell the 'wand' had been found under a tree, bloody thing still had bark on it. He briefly considered sending the company a demand to get his money back but ultimately decided to let things go, the trouble wasn't worth the three Galleons he'd spent to sign up. For several years, Harry would get the 'lessons' and throw them right into the nearest garbage can without looking for them. He figured that it was the worst purchase of his life, at least he did until his trial.

"And did you willfully cast magic while being underaged and outside of school?" Fudge demanded.

"No."

"What?" Fudge yelled.

"I was in school," Harry said loudly.

"You're trying to convince me that you were in school?" Fudge asked incredulously. "Perhaps you could tell us when they moved Hogwarts to Surrey."

"Wasn't attending Hogwarts," Harry replied.

"I've heard enough," Fudge said in disgust. "Guards take him . . ."

"But I haven't," Amelia interrupted. "Would you mind telling us what school you were attending?"

"Kwikspell correspondence course," Harry replied. "Fully accredited by the Ministry. In fact, I believe the Minister here is the major share holder, aren't you, Minister?"

"Thank you Mr. Potter," Amelia said kindly, watching Fudge's face purple out of the corner of her eye. "I don't think we have a choice aside from dismissing the charges and offering our apologies, Minister if you would?"

AN: Might use this concept again some time, perhaps there are courses by mail that aren't useless and perhaps not. moshehim was good enough to contribute one of the above lines.

Part 03, concept and a scene by dbagini: Swap

"Harry."

"What is it Hermione?" Harry asked.

"Good luck," she hugged him in front of the Order, "and have them check your wand."

"But . . ."

"Just do it," She plead. "And remember, you haven't cast a Patronus in ages."

"Okay."

"Promise?"

"I promise," Harry agreed, more then a bit confused by his friend's actions.

Harry listened in horror as Fudge gleefully read the charges against him.

"Check the wand!" yelled Harry, interrupting the bickering adults filling the tiers of the courtroom. "Use Prior Incantato and you'll see that I haven't cast a Patronus for ages."

Several loud minutes, and a reluctant check of the wand later, Harry was cleared of all charges and released.

"Thanks, Hermione," said Harry, handing back her wand and retrieving his own. "Boy am I glad they didn't think to check that it was actually my wand."

"Mister Potter," Amelia's voice stopped Harry before he had a chance to leave, "a word."

"Yes Madame Bones?"

"I was just wondering why your last two spells were the 'vibrating wand charm' and another that's normally used by witches to shave personal areas?"

"Uh . . ." Harry glanced at the rapidly reddening Hermione in astonishment. "Isn't that a bit personal Madame Bones?"

"Giving your girlfriend a 'hand' then," she said with a nod, "that's what I figured. Thank you Mister Potter."



Amelia walked off with a smile happy to have avoided snapping an 'innocent' boy's wand and even happier to have had a bit of fun with a pair of children. Mr. Potter would never believe Ms. Granger's protests and Ms. Granger would know that she owed the Bones family a favor, a win win situation so far as she was concerned.

Omake by: dbagini

What about getting a job that requires the use of magic? In Australia it is possible to get an 'extraordinary' driver's license before you are normally legally able to, if it is necessary for you to be able to get to work (eg no public transport).

"Hi, I'm here about the job," said Harry, holding out the help wanted sign he had taken from the store front.

"Bit young aren't you?" asked the grizzled looking man behind the counter. "Still at school I'll warrant."

"I can do the work, and your sign says all training and permits included," said Harry. "Won't that include a permit allowing me to use magic while I am working?"

"Well yes, but you still won't be able to use it at home-"

"But I'll be able to use it while I am on the job, right? And your sign says flexible work hours, and travel required, so it'll be impossible for anybody to say that I wasn't working at the time..."

"Welcome aboard, lad," said the man, holding out his hand for Harry to shake. "If you're smart enough to figure that out, you're smart enough for me."

Omake by: moshehim

Now, here's another idea:

III

"What do you mean I owe Hogwarts thirteen hundred and twenty three galleons?" shouted Snape. "How could that be?"

That is what the records say, MR. Snape." replied the irate goblin. "Take it up with Hogwarts, not with me!"

"But I had nine thousand galleons last time I checked!" Severus whined.

III

"I don't know what to tell you, my boy," said Albus Dumbledore, utterly confounded. Why would the Hogwarts account withdraw money from Severus's rather than paying him for his work? "Lets check with Minerva and Flitwick."

III

After a lot of searching, enlisting the help of professors Vector and Sinistra who were good at such tedious business and Madam Pince who had a way with books and records, as well as Pomona Sprout, who, showing her Hufflepuff tendencies, volunteered to help, they finally found the offending clause of the Hogwarts bylaws.

"Every unfair punishment dished out by a member of the staff would be paid for in hard gold, from the offending teacher's salary to the victim's tuition fee."

"I don't recall ever seeing this bylaw before, who put it in?" asked the Headmaster.

"Doesn't say," said his deputy. "Still, it's right beside another new bylaw, this one says that library books cannot be taken outside the castle. Really, who came up with such a ridiculous rule?" wondered McGonagall. She read on. "Ah, I should have known. Really, Severus," she said, "must you go out of your way to annoy the students. I move we strike out that foolish rule. All in favor?" she asked.

Pomona, Filius and McGonagall raised their hands, along with Sinistra and Vector. Only Madam Pince held hers down. Oh, and Severus, too, off course, greasy git that he is.

"Well, that business is done with," sighed Dumbledore. Now, what with the bylaw about unjust punishment? Isn't it too harsh?"

"Well," started Minerva, "I suppose you have a point there, it seems to me some people might dish out punishments they believe to be just, not knowing they aren't. Here, while we were searching this, I checked my own account and found I was short some galleons myself, I'm afraid to say."

"Why don't we make it conditional than?" piped Filius Flitwick.

"What do you mean?" asked the Headmaster?

"Let's say the first five offenses would be recorded, then the offending teacher be put on probation and all grades, points, punishments and awards administered by him - or her - be taken before a board of the four heads of houses. Hmmm. Well, seeing as Severus here is the major cause of this problem, I would say not him. Aurura, would you be so kind as to stand for him on this matter?"

"Why, sure, Filius, it'll be a pleasure." said professor Sinistra with a smile.

"Headmaster, I must protest," said Snape, but Sprout cut him off.

"Maybe she should stand for you for some other matters as well," she said. "Such as the Slytherin head of house!"

"Pomona., really," said Dumbledore, and this time, it was Flitwick who cut him off.

"This is a discussion for another time." he said. "For now, let's make it a decision of that board, and, upon five more offenses, then make him pay for it." At the look Dumbledore was giving him, Flitwick continued. "Now, since Albus here is so big on second chances, let us limit it for a period of two years, then give the offenders a second chance, starting the cycle anew, to see if they had changed."

Now Snape was giving him a look of horror. McGonagall, however, had a contemplative look on her face. "All in favour?" she asked, holding her hand up. Filius Flitwick, having suggested the bylaw, of

course held his as well, as did Pomona Sprout, head of Hufflepuff house, with all her ideals of fair play, Aurora Sinistra, with a slight promotion and more influence on the school at the table, held hers as well. Shortly after, professor Vector lifted her hand too. Madam Pince abstained. She didn't give punishment, it really didn't concern her.

"Good," said McGonagall, "motion passed." Snape was really horrified now. "Now is the matter of how Severus can add school bylaws without counseling with the rest of us first. I put up a motion that all school bylaws should be taken up with the head-of-houses board - with Aurora on it in Severus's stead, of course - the Headmaster and the deputy, before being put to the book. All in favor?" she asked, holding her hand up again. The same people as before voted once more, and the "ayes" had it.

III

"Mr. Potter," said professor McGonagall. "We seem to have hit a snag."

"Oh?" asked Harry.

"Yes. You see, you paid for this school year already, so you have six more to pay for. However, the school seems to owe you some money, so much that it covers your tuition for the next six years, and then some, so we don't know what to do to repay you."

"Hmmm..." Harry "hmmmed". "Let me think about it." He thought about it. "I have an idea," he said. "This is what you have to do..." he told her his plan.

Pretty soon, Minerva's thin lips contracted in a grin.

III

"What?" shrieked Snape. "I have to buy the Gryffindors' brooms for Quidditch?"

"No, no, Severus you have to buy Harry Potter brooms for Quidditch, then he'll donate them to the school in memory of James, his father.

He agreed to that, it's a circular deal, you see." McGonagall explained. "Don't you think it's a nice gesture on his part?"

"Arrrrrrrrrggggggggggggggggggge!" Snape yelled. And yelled. And yelled.

Disclaimer: There is only one person to blame for this travesty . . . you know who you are.

Family Affairs

or

Keeping it in the Family

Definitely not going to use Putting his Sister to the Test.

I've often been struck by how significant an effect a single small change can have on a story. For instance, what if Ron had decided to fix his dress robes?

"Hey Hermione," Ron called out, "could you help me with something?"

"Sure," she agreed, "what class?"

"None of them," Ron replied, "could you help me fix up my dress robes? Maybe alter them to fit me better and remove all the lace?"

"I'd love to help but I can't," Hermione admitted, "I've never been too good at doing domestic stuff like cooking and sewing."

"Oh." A small change was made to the mental folder labeled 'Hermione.' The notation 'friend and potential girl' was changed to 'friend and one of the guys,' admittedly a guy with feelings and lumpy bits on his chest but a guy all the same. "Thanks anyway." Ron discarded the vague plans he'd had to take his friend to the ball, it would have been a nice gesture but his mum would never forgive him if she found out that he was leading Hermione on.

Ron drifted through life for the next week, oddly aware that there was something bothering him, and not sure what it was. "Maybe I could get Ginny to help with my robes?" Ron mused. "I know mum taught

her all that girly stuff.” With a pleased smile, “Ron went off in search of his sister.”

“Sure,” Ginny agreed, “no problem.”

“Great I’ll . . .”

“But what’s in it for me?” She continued.

“What do you want?” Ron asked with a sigh. After a protracted bout of negotiation that resulted in a deal that both parties could live with, Ron was left feeling that there was still something that he was forgetting. “Hermione,” he gasped. “She must have wanted me to ask her out when we talked before.” After all, no woman could resist a Weasley. “That’s why she was so disappointed when she couldn’t find her . . . I’ll have to find a way to let her down gently, she is one of my best mates after all.”

It took Ron three days to think of a satisfactory solution and when he did he was humbled by the depth of his own genius.

“You want me to do what?” Harry asked dully.

“Ask Hermione to the Ball,” Ron repeated himself, “make sure to let her know that I’m already going with a bird that I’m serious about and then ask her.” His two friends would have a date that wouldn’t try to take advantage of them and he’d neatly side stepped the whole feelings issue, Ron couldn’t help but be impressed with himself. “Don’t want her to be alone do you?”

“I guess not,” Harry agreed. “Okay, I’ll do it.”

“Great.”

It took Harry a couple hours to work up the courage to ask his friend to the dance, it was nerve racking and Harry figured that the only way it could be worse would be if he were going to ask her on a real date.

“Sorry Harry,” Hermione said with a troubled look on her face, “but I’ve already said yes to someone.”

“Oh . . .”

“But I'll save a dance for you,” she said quickly, “and there's still time to find a date for yourself. I'll even help you, after all if Ron was able to find a date then I'm sure you'll have no trouble.”

“Thanks Hermione,” Harry said with a relieved smile, glad that he'd gotten through everything unscathed.

Things settled down until the next Hogsmead week end, when Ron turned a corner and bumped into a very familiar face.

“Ron.”

“Mum?” Ron asked in shock, Hogsmead weekends would be ruined if his mother made it a habit to visit him during them. “What are you doing here?” Not to mention the ribbing the guys would give him.

“Have you asked a girl to the ball yet?”

“Not yet mum,” Ron replied nervously. “Why?”

“I want you to take your younger sister,” his mother said firmly.

“But . . . Harry . . .”

“Has someone else he likes according to the rumors I've heard,” Molly sighed, she'd dreamed of having a big happy Weasley family and there was still time for it to happen but she wanted it now damn it. “A dance is a very important thing for a girl and Ginny can't go unless one of the upper years takes her, at least I'll know that nothing will happen if she's with you.”

“Nothing will happen anyway mum?”

“You don't want any of the other boys to take advantage of your sweet young innocent sister do you?”

“No mum,” Ron said in defeat, knowing that he'd lost the argument.

“Then it's settled,” Molly said with a happy grin. “Thank you Ron.”

At the dance and mindful of her promise, Hermione sought out her friend for the dance she'd promised him.

"Sorry to cut in Parvati," Hermione said smoothly, "but I promised Harry that I'd save a dance for him."

"Not at all," the girl said with a forced smile.

"Have you seen Ron yet?" Harry asked.

"No," Hermione replied, "but I am interested to see who the girl he's 'so serious' about is."

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "There he is."

"Where . . . oh, who's the girl."

"I think it's . . . oh."

"My."

"God," Harry gasped. "Uh . . ."

"Yeah," Hermione agreed, her face a lovely shade of green.

AN: Might have to write a bit more of this, my idea is that the purebloods shrug it off, they've been nailing their sisters and cousins for generations, the muggle born and some of the half bloods are a bit grossed out by the whole thing.

Unrelated Omake: The Ritual

"Attention everyone," Dumbledore said loudly, "Severus has some information to share, go on Severus . . ."

"The Dark Lord has temporarily given up his plans to kill Potter," Snape said in an oily voice. "Instead he's come upon a ritual that will allow him to take Potter's power . . . then he'll kill the brat."

"No . . . not Harry," Molly gasped.



"Yes Harry," Dumbledore agreed. "I've done some research on this spell and it requires two sisters and a virgin wizard. The two sisters deflower the wizard and . . . something you'd like to share with the rest of us Ms. Tonks?" Dumbledore asked in his best stern professor tone, not even close to McGonagall's but it was a good try.

"What happens if the wizard isn't a virgin?" Tonks asked between giggles. "Would . . . would . . . would de-virginising Harry protect him? Oh god I can't say it with a straight face."

"Voldemort will be destroyed . . . I imagine that all his Death Eaters will also perish from magical backlash and then all the power will be absorbed by Harry's magical core . . . why?"

"Urk." Snape vomited all over the Headmaster and fell to the ground screaming, two minutes later he died . . . horribly.

"Albus," Minerva began with an odd look on her face, "just when did you get this information?"

"Two weeks ago," Dumbledore replied absently, his eyes locked on his fallen friend. "Severus told me that Voldemort was planning to execute his plan as soon as he could find Harry. Impossible with the fact that Harry is locked in his apartment and under Order guard."

"And just who is guarding him now?"

"Uh?" Dumbledore looked around the room. "Perhaps I've made a small miscalculation."

"Tonks."

"Yes Professor McGonagall?"

"Why don't you explain why you found the idea that Mr. Potter was a virgin so humorous?" The old woman's voice got colder and colder as she spoke. "Do you perhaps have some first hand knowledge that he isn't?"

"I haven't done anything with him," Tonks said quickly, "even without seeing him . . . perform. I never figured he hadn't . . . uh . . . you know."

"Saw him?" Molly shrieked, "poor Harry."

"Care to explain those comments Ms. Tonks?" Minerva asked in a slightly warmer tone.

"Think back to when you were a teenaged girl," Tonks said slowly, "there's a boy that lives in your neighborhood and your parents tell you not to go near him because he's bad news."

"I get your point," Minerva said dryly.

"It's no wonder he looks so tired and thin when he gets to Hogwarts," Tonks continued in an awestruck voice, "he's doing every girl within two hours walking of his house . . . half their mothers too. Never thought I'd see one boy service and satisfy twelve women. Not only did Harry do it, he wore them all out and made three 'rest' stops on the way back to his room at the Dursley house."

"Thank you Ms. Tonks."

"And it's no wonder he doesn't have much of a love life at school," Tonks continued, heedless of the people motioning for her to stop. "He needs his rest . . . hell, I'll bet if we just keep him at Hogwarts for half the summer then Harry'll be so pent up that he'll fry Voldemort no problem."

"Looks to me like he already has," Moody said with a satisfied look at Snape's corpse, "anyone up for a celebratory drink?"

AN: Yes I've seen fics with the idea that Volde is going to use Virgin Harry in an eeeevil ritual. Usually an excuse for a character to make Harry ineligible for the ritual.

Mini Omake by: meteoricshipyards

"Good lord, Severus! Have you ever seen a first year class so large.

"And all of them with green eyes and black hair, or else with red hair! Where's my draught of Living Death! Wake me in seven year."

Omake for "Tea for Four Ends the War" by talonaj2003"

The werewolf wenches had easily found Remus Lupin's rather quaint home. When he opened the door, he'd blinked in a rather shocked fashion. The twin sisters looked him up and down and couldn't help their giggles, while the leader frowned.

"Remus Lupin?"

"Yes?"

"We're here to seduce you," she stated matter of factly. Remus blinked. The twins giggled again.

"... I see? Won't you come in?"

"Come inside? Sure you wouldn't want us to come outside?" One of the other wenches asked with a leer. Remus smiled congenially, inside trying to keep his inner wolf from howling.

"Well, it's... Not every night that this happens, you see," he explained. The leader frowned.

"Sure." She stepped inside, accepting his offer of tea with her fellow females, the twins soon cuddling on either side of him on an old couch.

The leader felt Lupin was a rather sad werewolf. While he was good looking, she supposed, she didn't think he was anywhere near as strong or attractive as other males she'd known (in both senses of the term). Still, orders were orders, and she supposed making him happy would be fine, no matter how little time it took.

About five hours later...

"OH GOD YES! YES! YESSSSS!"

The leader growled and Remus growled in her ear back. She'd been so mistaken! Even against SIX werewolves, a normal male would be dead by now! But he kept going and going...!

She decided to thank her mistress Bellatrix for firing her-This was the best last assignment she'd ever had!

Meanwhile, elsewhere Sirius Black cheered his friend on, especially for "The twins Moony! The TWINS!"

Disclaimer: Loyalty up, loyalty down, loyalty makes the world go round.

## Loyalty Up, Loyalty Down

"Can I talk with you for a moment Harry?" Hermione asked as the DA meeting began to break up.

"Sure," Harry agreed. "What do you need?"

"I had my mum send a few books for you," Hermione explained as she handed over a large package.

"On War by Von Clausewitz?"

"I was hoping they could help you with the DA," Hermione said in a rush.

"How could muggle books help me with Defense?" Harry asked with a mystified look on his face.

"They're about how to be a good leader," Hermione explained. "Just look at them Ok?" She rushed off before he could answer.

"I'm no leader," Harry muttered to himself. Feeling a bit guilty, but reasoning that no muggle book could hold the magic he needed to learn. Harry absently tossed the books into his trunk and forgot about them for several months. Forgot about them until after he'd spent a disastrous night in the Department of Mysteries.

Harry was feeling lower then he ever had. The battle was over, Sirius was dead, and his friends were all in the hospital wing.

"You OK Harry?" Neville asked with an earnest expression on his face.

"No," Harry admitted. "I really cocked things up didn't I?"

"I wouldn't say that," Neville replied quickly. "We won didn't we?"

"But everyone . . ."

"Knew the risks," Neville interrupted. "And we went anyway . . . of course we would, you're our leader Harry. We'd follow you to hell if you asked us to."

"I never asked for any of this."

"But you have it," Neville retorted. "So you made a mistake, the important thing is that you learn from it. I'm always messing up in class Harry, but I rarely make the same mistake twice . . . well, not without help anyway."

"Thanks Neville," Harry said with a grateful smile. "I needed that."

"Happy to help Harry," Neville said with a grin.

"I gotta go do something," Harry said. "See you later Neville."

"Ok Harry," Neville agreed.

Harry rushed up the stairs and dug through his things until he found the books that Hermione had given him. "A good leader would have never led his friends into an ambush," Harry muttered to himself. He grabbed a book at random and began flipping through it until a quote caught his eye. "'There's a great deal of talk about loyalty from the bottom to the top. Loyalty from the top down is even more necessary and is much less prevalent. One of the most frequently noted characteristics of great men who have remained great is loyalty to their subordinates.' General George S. Patton, Jr," Harry spoke the words aloud. He read and reread the quote a dozen times, allowing himself to feel the full impact of the words. The DA, his friends had certainly been loyal to him but was the reverse true? Harry's expression firmed as he walked into the common room.

"Katie," He called out.

"Yeah Harry?" She asked a bit nervously.

"Put out the word that the DA is going to have another meeting before we go home," Harry ordered. "Ok?"

"Ok," she agreed.

"And see if you can find Parvati or Lavender, tell them I would like to speak with at least one and preferably both of them."

"You got it Harry."

"Thanks, I'm gonna be in the library for a while . . . not sure where I'll be after that."

"We'll find you," Katie assured him. "Glad you're feeling better."

"I'm just too busy to feel sorry for myself right now," Harry replied. "I'll go back to sulking when I have a spare moment."

"We'll just have to keep you busy then," Katie giggled as she ran up the stairs to the girl's dorms. The potential double meaning sailed right over Harry's head.

Parvati and Lavender found him in the library studying several small travel guides about forty five minutes later.

"Harry," Parvati called out. She and Lavender rushed to his side.

"You wanted to speak with us?" Lavender asked.

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "I need your help on interpreting a Prophecy."

"Important?" Parvati asked.

"It has to do with me and Voldemort," Harry said.

"Do you mind if I get my sister?" Parvati said nervously.

"I didn't know Padma was interested in Divination?" Harry said thoughtfully.

"And . . . well, there . . . " Parvati and Lavender shared a meaningful look. "Promise you won't tell anyone?"

"Tell anyone what? That your sister likes divination?"

"No," Parvati replied. "You know how Fred and George like to change places?"

"You too huh?" Harry said with a laugh. "I swear on my magic and my life that I won't tell a soul unless you give me leave."

"You didn't have to do that," Parvati said with an odd look on her face.

"Yes I did," Harry disagreed. "You guys have given me everything, loyalty, friendship, everything. The least I can do is the same for you."

"I . . . wait here," Parvati said haltingly. "I'll be right back with Parvati."

"But I thought . . . oh," Harry laughed. "No problem Padma."

"That promise means a lot to her you know," Lavender said after her friend had gone. "You really didn't have to go quite that far."

"I really did," Harry maintained stubbornly. "I led you all into a trap, I have to do everything I can to make that right and to protect you."

"But . . ."

"No buts," Harry interrupted. "I'm sure you'd do the same if you were in my place."

"Ok Harry," Lavender agreed. The thing was, she was absolutely convinced that Harry believed everything he was saying, actually believed that he wasn't doing anything special. At that moment Lavender decided, she would give Harry her loyalty, her wand, and her life if circumstances required it. From that moment unto the end of time, she was Harry's girl and the thought it likely that her friends would join her after they'd had a chance to talk.

The twins joined them a few minutes later and Harry led the three girls to an empty classroom and put up every privacy charm he knew.

"Feel free to put up any I missed," Harry said. The girls nodded and added a couple of their own.

"What's this about Harry?" Padma asked.

"There's a prophecy regarding me and Voldemort," Harry replied. "Roughly it states that one of us must kill the other."



"Exactly what does it say?" Lavender asked intently. "Word for word."

"I'd also like to know all the details," Parvati interjected. "Start from the beginning and tell us everything you know about who gave it, to whom, where, when, who knows, what do they know, what have they done with the information . . . basically everything you know."

Harry took a deep breath and began speaking, telling the girls everything he knew and giving every detail he could think of. He spared nothing, The potential embarrassment was worth it when he considered the fact that holding something back could be worth the life of one of his friends.

"So that's it," Harry finished, feeling a bit drained. "That's why Voldemort came after my family, that's why he was in the Department of Mysteries, that's the reason everything happened. What do you think?"

"I think the prophecy has already been fulfilled," one of the twins said after a moment of thought. "You vanquished the Dark Lord and he marked you as his equal. It seems fairly straight forward to me, what do you two think?"

"I agree," Lavender said quickly. "But I don't think we should discount the fact that it may not even have anything to do with Harry or Voldemort. It's too vague to mean much. What do you think Pad?"

"I think that's possible," Padma admitted. "One has to admit that the ability to reflect a killing curse, even if only one time, is an unknown power."

"So you think he may be able to reflect it again?" Parvati asked.

"I think it'd be best not to test the theory," Padma said with a grin. "If it works, great. If not . . ."

"No more Harry," Lavender said with a shudder. "What do we do now Harry?"

"That's all I needed," Harry replied, "I've got a few other things I need to do before the meeting but . . ."

"Do you need help?" Lavender asked quickly.

"Sure," Harry agreed, "but wouldn't you rather do something else?"

"I'd rather do something important for a change," Lavender replied, "what about you two?" The twins shared an unreadable look before nodding in agreement. "So that's it Harry, what do you need us to do?"

|||||

"What do you think this meeting is about?" Dean asked for the hundredth time.

"Harry says it's important," Neville maintained, "so it must be."

Across the room, Hermione and Ron were discussing the same thing, a bit mystified by the fact that their friend hadn't chosen to let them in on the agenda before the meeting started.

Unnoticed, Harry walked in with the three girls. For a few seconds, Harry stood facing the crowd, flanked by Lavender Brown and both Patils. Taking a few deep breaths, he opened his mouth and began speaking.

"Can I have your attention please," Harry called out. The room became quiet and every eye turned to him. "Thank you. First of all, I'd like to start by apologizing to all of you. I've made mistakes, mistakes that have sent some of you to the hospital wing. I can't promise that it won't happen again but I will promise that I'll do my best to keep it from happening again."

"Don't worry about it Harry," an anonymous voice called out.

"To start with, I'd like to bring some things out into the open. If you decide to stand by me then it will probably mean that we'll have to fight Voldemort and his Death Eaters again. I'm not saying that I'm planning to go out looking for a fight, I never look for trouble."

"But it always seems to find you," another voice called out. The room dissolved into laughter.

"Right," Harry agreed. "So I think I should start by admitting that I can't beat Voldemort in a duel, we did well in the Department of Mysteries but I think we should call that a fluke. So we have two problems," Harry continued. "The first is that Voldemort is going to come after me and everyone around me. The second is that at best, we'll be able to hold our ground until help arrives . . . does anyone disagree?" Harry looked around. "Good, so how do we solve those problems?"

"We train," Neville said loudly. "Until our hands are too tired to hold a wand."

"Partly right," Harry agreed. "But if my time at Hogwarts has taught me anything, it's that safest place in the United Kingdom is relative. I've been attacked by Voldemort and his cronies here more times than anywhere else combined. What we need is time, time to train ourselves to the point that we can return knowing that we have a good chance of winning."

"Return?"

"I've contacted several schools around the world," Harry replied. "You'd be amazed at how many doors open to someone named Harry Potter." The DA shared a brief laugh at Harry's last statement. "They're all willing and able to accept anyone I recommend as a transfer student." Harry took a deep breath. "Now and in the last war, the Death Eaters confined themselves to Europe. I'm hoping that they won't decide to change their minds."

"What about you Harry?" Neville asked.

"I'll be going with you," Harry said quickly. "Well . . . some of you anyway. I'm hoping that we can break up, every school teaches different things."

"Why?" Neville asked. He held up his hand and added, "not saying it's wrong. Just wondering what your reason is."

"Different schools specialize in different things," Harry explained. "For example, Hogwarts is considered by many to have one of the best Transfiguration programs in the world. Anyone here know that?"

Hermione raised her hand with a smirk. "Okay, did anyone besides Hermione know that?" He looked around the room. "Thought so. Why don't we go to schools that specialize in things we want to know? For example . . . Neville, what subject are you best in?"

"Herbology," Neville said immediately. "You know that Harry."

"Yes I do," Harry agreed. "Would you like to attend the school with the best Herbology program in the world?"

"Yeah," Neville agreed. "I would."

"Belize is the home of the 'Institute of Herbal Magic,' set up as a small school to train students that couldn't take the time to return to the United Kingdom it rapidly came to prominence as the best place to study plants and it changed its name one hundred years ago to reflect that. Also has a fairly good potions program."

"Potions?" Neville asked sickly.

"No Snape," Harry reminded him.

"That's right," Neville said brightly. "Sign me up for that one Harry."

"What about Defense?" Susan asked from the back of the group.

"Well," Harry began. "That depends."

"Depends?"

"On what aspect you want to study," Harry explained. "There is a small school in France that specializes in Formal Dueling, there's a Military Academy in the United States but it's more of a preparatory school, there's one in western Canada that has some good instructors, and there is one in Australia that deals in Defense against creatures . . . well, there's also another in South Africa that has a program on Defense against creatures but that's a small part of the curriculum, main part is on game management."

"Which one are you going to?" Susan demanded.

"The one in Canada," Harry replied.

"Sign me up for that one then," Susan said firmly.

"Sign Hufflepuff house up for that one," Hanna corrected. "Well, most of the house anyway. Few of us might want to branch out a bit." The assembled Hufflepuffs gave a nod of agreement.

|||||

"Cornelius," Dumbledore announced himself.

"Dumbledore?" Fudge asked in shock. "How'd you get in here?"

"There are some things I need to tell you," Dumbledore said seriously, "would you care to listen?"

|||||

Amelia sighed in annoyance as she read the take from the bugs she'd had installed in the Minister's office and home. It was so much easier to monitor someone when your people were responsible for their security, she thought with a smile. Nevertheless, the information was disturbing. With a sigh, she picked up her report on Hogwarts and reread the pertinent sections. The way she saw it, she was at a crossroads. With another sigh, she summoned her assistant.

"Yes Madame Bones?"

"I want you to pass a message along for me."

"What is it Madame Bones?"

"Be sure that Auror Brooks is told that 'the cattle are restless' be sure to use that exact phrase."

"Understood Madame Bones."

|||||

Dumbledore wondered briefly if he was doing the right thing when he left the Minister's office. Fudge was a fool, but could be counted on to do the right thing even if his motives were less than pure.

"It's for the best," Dumbledore told himself. "For the greater good. What are the wants of the one when compared to the needs of society as a whole." Doing his best to ignore the little whispers of doubt in the back of his mind, Dumbledore did his best to put the matter out of his mind. Right or wrong the dice had been cast, it was too late for second thoughts.

|||||

Harry had expected to use that Hogsmead weekend to make a few last minute preparations. What he did not expect was to be approached by a strange wizard.

"Mr. Potter," a nondescript man said with a smile, "a private party wishes to meet with you in one of the back rooms at the Three Broomsticks. It would be in your best interests to grant them a few moments of your time."

"Who?" Harry demanded.

"I'm just a messenger," the man said with a shrug, "what you do with the message is up to you."

|||||

"Is everything ready?" Fudge demanded.

"Madame Bones is taking care of a few last minute details Minister," one of the flunkies simpered.

"Lock down the Ministry until she gets back then," Fudge demanded. "I don't want there to be any chance for word to leak out."

"Dumbledore sent another note demanding that we be gentle Minister."

"Dumbledore isn't in charge here," Fudge growled, "I am."

"Yes sir."

|||||

"Susan," Harry barked as he walked into the Great Hall, "be sure that everyone packs up and is ready to go with no prior notice."

"Yes Harry," she agreed, "what's up."

"Someone just gave me a rather disturbing warning," Harry replied. "Be ready to fight and run, with any luck we'll be gone before we have to fight."

"You don't have any luck Harry," she said quickly, "Hufflepuff House is ready to fight."

"Knew I could count on you Susan."

|||||

"You don't really think we'd let you go do you Potter?" Fudge asked with a sneer. "The only person that can defeat the Dark Lord."

"So you're planning to force me to fight?" Harry asked mildly. He ignored Fudge and focused on Amelia Bones. "I'm disappointed in you Madame Bones, Susan really did think that you were better than that." Amelia avoided Harry's eye and made no comment.

"Aurors," Fudge screamed shrilly. "Arrest him."

Amelia raised an eyebrow and asked Fudge in a neutral tone "What's the charge minister?"

"Sedition, what else? When word gets out that "The-Boy-Who-Lived" has left Hogwarts, it will cause my government to fall."

"Sorry about this lad," one of the Aurors said mournfully.

"So am I," Harry replied. "Guys, if you would."

The Aurors froze, when half the students in the great hall produced wands and pointed them at the Aurors. The few in Gryffindor and

Hufflepuff that hadn't already, quickly joined their housemates with grim looks on their faces. Minerva shared a meaningful look with the heads of Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw and they discreetly drew their wands and focused on the group surrounding the Minister, hanging the law they weren't going to stand by and allow their students to be harmed.

"Stand down," Amelia said firmly. "Aurors, put away your wands."

"Don't listen to her," Fudge screamed. "They're just children, they're no match . . ."

"Exactly," Amelia said firmly. "They're just children."

"We also have an advantage you don't Aunt Amelia," Susan said in a shaky voice. "We can use deadly hexes, you can't . . . not unless you want a bloodbath."

"Susan . . . you'd really?"

"You'd have kidnapped Harry," Susan said firmly. "Sorry it had to come to this Aunt Amelia."

"These things happen Susan," Amelia said with a sigh. "I said Aurors, put down your wands."

"But Madame Bones . . ."

"Now," Amelia said sharply.

"What are you doing?" Fudge demanded.

"Preventing a bloodbath," Amelia replied tightly. "May I offer my parole Harry, or would you rather I disarm?"

"Susan?"

"I think we can trust her," Susan said uncertainly. "If we can't then I'll handle it."

"Good enough," Harry agreed.



"Your career is over," Fudge said shrilly.

"I've been thinking about retirement anyway," Amelia said with a shrug. "I presume you have a way out of here Harry?"

"And everyone's got their trunks in their pockets," Harry agreed. "Ready guys?" The group gathered around Harry who had produced a long length of cord. "I'm sorry it had to end like this Madame Bones."

"So am I Harry," she said with a sigh. "So am I." The group of students disappeared and Amelia looked over her Aurors. "Will that be all Minister?"

"You're ruined," Fudge squealed. "Ruined."

"You'll have my resignation on your desk in the morning," Amelia replied. "Let's go Aurors, I don't believe we have any further business here." Amelia returned to her office and packed up her things. Not much to show for a lifetime of work, she thought to herself as she looked over her possessions. She wrote out her resignation and paused before signing it. "Auror Tonks, my office now."

"You called boss?" Tonks said as she ran through the door. "You're really doing it then?"

"I'm really doing it," Amelia agreed. With a wave of her wand she raised the privacy charms around her office. "Up for an undercover assignment?"

"What do you want me to do?"

"Become fifteen again," Amelia replied. "And Canadian."

"Uh . . ."

"I already have your paperwork drawn up," Amelia continued. "You'll be listed as being on a deep cover assignment with no opportunity to report."

"What do you want me to do?"

"I'll explain later," Amelia said. "If of course you agree."

"Why not," Tonks agreed with a shrug.

"Pack your desk," Amelia said simply. "And your apartment. I'll meet you there within the hour. If I don't . . . well, if I don't you are to open the envelope containing your new identification, take out the silver coin, and say the word 'raid' is that understood?"

"Yes boss," Tonks agreed.

"Do the same thing if anyone that isn't me arrives."

"Yes boss."

Tonks returned to her apartment and spent a very nervous half hour packing and waiting for her boss to arrive.

"It's me." The sound of Amelia's voice behind her caused Tonks to jump.

"How in the hell did you do that boss?" Tonks demanded.

"If you have as long a career as I did, you learn a few tricks." Amelia said smugly. "Do you have that portkey?"

"Right here boss," Tonks agreed.

"Let me touch it," Amelia said. "You have everything?"

"Yes boss."

"You've told your parents that you won't be around?"

"Yes boss."

"Raid."

IIIIIIIIII

The group of students reappeared on a brood savanna.

"Where are we Harry?" Ron asked with a frown.

"We should be in Alberta," Harry said with a relieved smile. "Spread out, don't get too jumpy I'm expecting company . . . the good kind if we're lucky." His companions nodded grimly and spread out. "Susan stay by me."

"Who are we waiting for Harry?" Susan asked as she walked to Harry's side.

"Me," a familiar voice said dryly.

"Aunt Amelia?" Susan screamed. Her hand went for her wand but was stopped by Harry's grip on her wrist.

"She's with us," Harry said loudly. "Don't do anything."

"Thank you Harry," Amelia said with a smile. "And Susan, did you really think I'd back Fudge against you and your friends?"

"I didn't know what to think," the girl admitted. "I . . ." Without another word she threw herself into Amelia's arms.

"She warned me what Fudge was planning and arranged the portkeys," Harry explained. "I couldn't have done any of this without her help."

"And you didn't tell Susan," Hermione said in an odd tone, "how very Dumbledore of you."

"I asked him not to," Amelia said loudly, "I needed everyone's reactions to be natural. I'm very proud of you Susan," she said to her niece, "you chose your friends and what was right over me and what was easy. Very very proud."

"What if I had chosen the easy way?" Susan asked in a small voice.

"I'd have still loved you as much as ever," Amelia said, "and then I'd have been proud of you for other reasons."

"This is all very heartwarming boss, but what am I here for?" Tonks asked in a petulant tone.

"Bodyguard," Amelia replied. "I want you to stick to Harry like glue until after he's had a chance to deal with the Dark Bastard."

"Happy to do it boss," Tonks agreed cheerfully.

"What about you Aunt Amelia?" Susan asked.

"I'm retired," Amelia said dryly. "I'm going to dedicate my time to my niece, where you go I go."

AN: You didn't really think I'd write an evil Quisling Amelia Bones did you?

Disclaimer: Eh? Waa don youu shay dat to ma fache

Loving Luna Lovegood

"Who are you?" Vernon growled.

"I'm Harry's girlfriend," Luna replied with a dreamy smile. "And I hope to be keeping you awake with lot's of loud sex over the summer, pleased to meet you."

"What?" The large man asked in shock, his brain refusing to believe what his ears told him.

"I put my pet in your pocket," Luna ignored the oaf. "Wanna see?"

The large man reflexively glanced down and was horrified to see a pair of glowing eyes looking back at him.

"He won't hurt you if you leave us alone," Luna said absently. "For some reason he just hates it when people bother me . . . his name is pinky. I named him that because he likes to eat fingers . . . you have a big head, is it supposed to be that shade of purple, I like pie, do you like pie? My name is Luna, what's your name? Is it Ugly? I bet it's ugly since you're so ugly . . . or maybe it's fatty fatty fat fat, that's a dumb name. You should change it to something cool like Coqmaster . . ." She really didn't care for the purple man, not after the way he'd treated Harry but she'd resolved to be as polite as she could be expected to be under the circumstances.

"Boy's upstairs," Vernon interrupted. "Why don't you take your pet and go visit him." His eyes were still locked on the evil thing in his pocket and his mind was on the warm stream of urine making its way down his leg.

"Ok," Luna agreed cheerfully. "Bye bye." Luna skipped up the stairs, burst into Harry's room, and was horrified by what she found. "Harry," she gasped. "What have you done to yourself? You must have gained six hundred pounds since I last saw you. Not to mention the fact that you smell of sweat, urine, fecal matter, and fungus. Have you been bathing? You've gotten ugly, did you eat some fruit of the ugly tree or did someone just beat you with one of the branches?"

"I'm not the freak," Dudley whined.

"How dare you try to trick me into thinking that you're Harry," Luna screamed. "Get out of his room and tell me where he is this instant." Relieved that Harry hadn't turned into a hideous monster, she wanted the thing out of her sight and Harry's thing in her sight as soon as possible.

"Freak's down the hall in the room with all the locks," Dudley replied as he got up. He was gonna follow the Draco Malfoy school of conflict resolution, that is to say he was running off to tell daddy.

With a sigh of relief that she'd resolved yet another obstacle in her path to months of active enthusiastic sex, Luna skipped down the hall and burst into Harry's room . . . only to find him peacefully asleep under a worn blanket.

"Poor Harry got too tired waiting for me and fell asleep," Luna cooed. "I'd better arrange everything so that everything is arranged. It's what a good girlfriend would do after all," Luna said to herself with a happy smile. "Now, where should I put that sex swing?"

Harry awoke several hours later and was more than a bit surprised to see his reflection looking back at him.

"When did the Dursleys put a mirror on my ceiling?" Harry muttered to himself. "And why didn't I notice it when I went to sleep?"

"Because I just put it in," Luna replied happily.

"Who?" Harry looked over to find a happy Luna looking back at him wearing nothing but a naughty smile. "Luna?"

"Uh huh," Luna agreed. "Would it be too much trouble to get up for a bit? I'd like to replace your bed with another I picked up earlier today, it's round and spins around."

"Ok," Harry agreed. "What are you doing here?"

"I wanted to spend the summer with my boyfriend," Luna explained. She waited until Harry had climbed out of bed before waving her

wand to disappear the old worn bed, another wave un-shrunk the new one. "Does it look good here or do you think I should put it in one of the other rooms?"

"Other rooms?" Harry asked despite himself.

"Yes," Luna agreed. "I found some sort of fat troll in your other bedroom pretending to be you and I sent him packing." She paused to think while sucking on the end of her wand. "And your uncle was nice enough to offer us the master bedroom and everything else on the second floor and attic if I promised not to put my pet in his pocket again . . . incidentally, we had a talk and he's thinking about changing his name to Coqmaster. "

"Uh . . . who's your boyfriend?" Harry asked slowly. "And how are you able to use magic?"

"I'm able to use magic because father registered himself as my tutor this summer," Luna explained. "And you're my boyfriend silly."

"I am?"

"Did I forget to tell you?" Luna asked contritely. "I'm sorry, I must have got carried away with getting ready and arranging to spend the summer together. Forgive me?"

"Sure Luna," Harry agreed. "But . . . mumph." He cut off when Luna threw herself into his arms and did her very best to wrap her tongue around his uvula.

"So," Luna said in a sultry voice. "Shall we shag now, or shall we shag later?"

"Shouldn't we talk about things first?" Harry asked, he was having a bit of trouble thinking and his face was pale from having all the blood rush out of the capillaries and into other parts of his body.

"Well," Luna mused. "I've never talked dirty to anyone before, but I'm happy to try. I'm a very naughty girl who needs to be punished . . . by punished, I mean I'd like you to push me down on your bed and be held down while you . . ."

"I meant talk about why you're here."

"We already talked about that," Luna said slowly. "I'm here to spend time with my boyfriend."

"Who's me right?"

"Yes," Luna agreed. "Are you feeling sick Harry?"

"And you're able to use magic because your father is teaching you?"

"Officially yes," Luna agreed. "But father is far too busy to actually teach me, we just told the Ministry that so that I can use magic without getting into trouble. Oh, I was thinking of knocking out some of the walls to make you one big room, but I didn't want to do anything without talking to you first."

"Uh . . ." Harry was saved from replying by the entrance of several dangerous looking Aurors.

"Harry Potter you're . . . wait, you're Lovegood's girl aren't you?"

"No that's Harry Potter, James Potter's boy," Luna said slowly. "Everyone knows that."

"False alarm folks," the Auror called over his shoulder. "Sorry about that Potter, we didn't realize you had a Lovegood with you."

"What's that have to do with anything?" Harry asked in confusion.

"Just a sec." The Auror reached into his pocket and pulled out a large book. After flipping through it for a few seconds, he marked a passage and handed the book to Harry.

"Lovegoods are allowed to do whatever they want so long as it doesn't hurt anyone important," Harry read. "What's this mean."

"It means that she can do anything she feels like doing that doesn't hurt anyone important like the Minister," the Auror said slowly. "You wouldn't believe how much easier things became after they enacted that law." He glanced down at the book. "Five hundred years ago."



“But . . . “

“And before you ask, no. It doesn't work to throw them into Azkaban.”

“They like that,” another Auror said with a horrified shudder.

“Best birthday party ever,” Luna agreed.

“We lost half our dementors that year,” the Auror continued with a haunted look in her eyes, “turns out dressing them in pink and forcing them to have a tea party destroys them. I can still hear the screams when I close my eyes to sleep at night.”

“I . . .”

“Let's go boys,” the Auror said loudly. “Potter, good luck and godspeed. We won't forget what you're doing for us.”

“What am I doing for you?”

“Keeping her distracted,” the Auror said with a grin. “I was there when she got bored as a child and decided to visit the Department of Magical Law Enforcement . . . let's just say that I'll never look at a duck the same way again. Every Lovegood's bad, but she's a Lovegood squared.”

“I'm not square,” Luna said hotly., she cupped her breasts. “Am I?”

“No you're Luna shaped,” Harry said absently. “So . . . what now?”

“Use magic, slander the Minister . . . hell walk around Diagon Alley naked if you want to, just so long as you're keeping her occupied.”

“Ok,” Harry agreed in shock. “Hey Luna.”

“Yes Harry?”

“You know what I want to do right now?”

“Walk around Diagon Alley naked and slander the Minister?” Luna asked hopefully.

"No I . . ."

"Want to have lot's of loud active sex?" Luna asked even more hopefully.

"No I want to go back to sleep," Harry said with a blank look on his face. It was obvious that he was dreaming . . . or perhaps having a bad reaction to that week old sandwich he'd eaten earlier, best thing to do would be to have a nice nap until the world made sense again.

"Ok," Luna agreed cheerfully. She was so happy that Harry was conserving his energy, looked like this was one relationship that was going to work. "I'd better get everything ready then," Luna said to herself, "so that Harry isn't disappointed in me when he wakes up."

Several hours later, Hermione woke up to find Luna looking down at her with an intent look on her face.

"Good morning Hermione," Luna said cheerfully.

"Luna?" Hermione muttered. "Wha . . . WHERE ARE YOUR CLOTHES?"

"Hmmmm?"

"Your clothes," Hermione said slowly. "Where are they?"

"Most of them are at home," Luna replied. "Why do you ask?"

"Why aren't you wearing them right now?"

"Because it seemed like too much trouble to go home just to get dressed," Luna said.

"But . . . why did you leave home naked in the first place?"

"I didn't leave home naked Hermione," Luna said with a hurt look on her face. "What kind of girl do you think I am."

"Where are the clothes that you wore when you left home and why aren't you wearing them now?" Hermione said slowly, she wanted to get this question right.

"They're scattered around Harry's room," Luna said proudly. "And getting dressed seemed like a waste of time since I was just going to get naked again as soon as we get back to Harry."

"So you an . . . wait, what do you mean by we?"

"You're coming with me," Luna explained. "That makes two of us and the proper conjugation is we. I suppose I could say the two of us or something else, but the word 'we' is more commonly used."

"Why am I going to go with you?"

"So that you can take your turn sexing up Harry of course," Luna laughed. "Why did you think."

"Me?" Hermione squeaked.

"You," Luna agreed. "Don't think that Cho didn't talk about how you ruined her relationship with Harry with your constant jealousy. Never let it be said that a Lovegood doesn't learn from other people's mistakes."

"Or that they learn from their own," Hermione muttered.

"What was that?"

"Nothing Luna."

"Ok, let's go then."

"What makes you think I'm going to go with you?" Hermione asked with a confident smirk.

"What makes you think you have a choice?" Luna asked serenely.

After a short 'discussion,' Luna managed to 'persuade' Hermione to accompany her back to Harry's house.

Hermione reluctantly followed the blond up the stairs and into Harry's newly expanded suite of rooms.

"Mmmmmmmph."

"What was that?"

"What was what?" Luna asked innocently.

"Mmmmmmmph."

"That," Hermione said. "Didn't you hear it?"

"Hmmm?"

"That isn't Harry's school trunk," Hermione accused. "And I know it isn't yours, who's is it?"

"Ginny's," Luna said with a smile. "Why?"

Hermione rushed over and flung open the trunk. "Ginny?" Hermione exclaimed. "Don't worry, I'll have you untied in just a bit." She removed the ball gag from the red head.

"No hurry," Ginny said quickly. "You get to like it after a while, I was just wondering if one of you could scratch the tip of my nose."

"Uh . . . sure Ginny," Hermione agreed.

"Now if you could close the trunk," Ginny said hopefully.

"Fine," Hermione said. "Luna," Hermione began with a shell shocked expression on her face. "If I open the closet, I'm not going to find the Patil twins am I?"

"Nope," Luna replied. She was planning to get them later, after the dungeon in the closet was finished."

After several days of what can only be described as sweaty, active, and enthusiastic exercise without having to go into details that would cause several readers to go into a coma . . . something else happened.

"Prepare to die Potter," Bellatrix cooed. "You'll . . . wait, is that a Lovegood with you?"

"Yeah?" Harry asked suspiciously.

"He's my boyfriend," Luna chirped.

"Oh . . . false alarm," Bella said loudly. "Let's get back to the Dark Lair."

"What the hell is going on?" Harry demanded.

"She's a Lovegood," one of the Death Eaters said as if it explained everything.

"But . . ."

"According to the Dark Lord Handbook," Bellatrix said as she pulled out a small pocket guide out from between her breasts. "And I quote 'mettle not in the affairs of Lovegoods' end quote."

"Oh . . . see you around then," Harry said with an intent look on his face, "I guess."

"I don't get it," Hermione said in confusion after the Death Eaters were gone. "I just don't understand why people act that way around Luna of all people."

"I think I've figured it out," Harry whispered to Hermione. "I know why everyone let's Luna's family do whatever they want."

"Really?" Hermione asked. "Why?"

"The more powerful a wizard is, the more insane they are." Harry said clearly. "Dumbledore's a bit odd, Voldemort is a power-mad psycho, Hermione you're a controlling information junky, I must admit that I have my issues . . ."

"Get to the point."

"Luna and her entire family are just fucking nuts," Harry explained. "Magically, they must be the most powerful family around."

AN: Basic idea is that Luna decides that Harry is her boyfriend, doesn't bother telling anyone about it esp. not Harry. Has a couple good lines but I'm not too happy with it, fun to write but not all that

great. May have to recycle some of this into something else, whole point of the fic was the last couple sentences. It all makes sense doesn't it?

Mini Omake by dogbertcarroll

1 week later...

Harry lay panting and dripping in sweat. "I think there is one too many O's in your last name."

"Lvegood?"

"Never mind."

Omake by meteoricshipyards

"Hermione! What are you doing here?"

"Luna made me come."

"She did? How could she. . . ?"

"You know how she's always talking about strange creatures that no one else has ever heard about?"

"Yes. Crumple Horned Snorkacks and things."

"Ever hear of a Tusked War Rabbit?"

"Uh, maybe."

"She lied about them."

"So they don't exist?"

"No, she lied when she said they were extinct."

Their conversation was interrupted by a scream.

Luna's voice came from the direction of the stairs. "But Mrs. Dursley, it will keep dogs off your garden."

Tom A.

Tusked War Rabbits first appeared in one of Michelle-31a's fics. Used without permission, but Luna forced me.

Another Omake by meteoricshipyards

OMAKE: Lovegoods in History

"Hey, Hagrid."

"Ello, Harry. What are you doing here?"

"Had to pick up a few things," he said, looking at the tub of margine in the top of the shopping bag.

"Do you have Luna in class?"

"The Lovegood girl? Naw. She don't need it, and I'm glad."

"Huh?"

"She's a Lovegood, ain't she? Would be afraid for me animals if she were in the class."

"But you said she didn't need it?"

"And great grandchild of ol' Dendroginous Lovegood probably knows more about magical creatures than me. He's the one that stopped the Dark Lord Raugnar."

"How'd he do that?"

"Raugnar had this plan, ya see, where he was going to let a bunch of Nundu loose in the Ministry to wipe out the government in one shot. Well Dendroginus was in there visiting someone in the Department of Mysteries, if I recall the story, and came to the lobby while everyone else was running away. The last person out of there says that he saw Dendroginous surrounded by Nundu. Later, when the Nundu didn't follow the witches and wizards down the stairs, some brave aurors went back to the lobby to find no one there. The aftermath of the whole thing is the Lovegoods to this day own a rather large Nundu

breeding range in Africa, Ragnar's digested remains were delivered to the Ministry mixed with Nundu dung, and a very polite letter is sent to the Lovegoods from the ministry begging them not to get their sons or daughters Nundu kittens for pets whenever a new Lovegood is born."

"Thanks, Hagrid! Enjoy your lunch!"

Harry ran out of the Leaky Cauldron with his bag of groceries, including the ten cans of Magical Kitten Chow that Luna had asked him to pick up while he was out.

Omake by Christopher

Luna Lovegood, soon to be Potter (if she had her way... and she would, thanks to a 500 year old law), sat across from Hermione Granger. Hermione Granger, the brightest witch in recent Hogwarts history

glared back at the blonde before speaking.

"I think, therefore I exist." Hermione said, smirking. When Luna had come to her looking for answers to a problem that had been bothering her, Hermione had been more than happy to help her out. Now though, she was a little less excited about the problem solving.

"You may think you exist." Luna shot back, "And I am sure you thought you existed yesterday, but how do I know that the you that you thought you were yesterday is the same you that you think you are today?"

Hermione blinked. "What?"

Luna sighed and began to speak slowly, as if to a small child, "How do I know that your perceptions of reality have not changed since yesterday?"

"That's not what you said." Hermione challenged.

"Yes it was." Luna countered.



"No..." Hermione started, but was cut off.

"Okay, Hermione, you say thinking proves you exist? What about the chair you are sitting in?"

Hermione looked at Luna, down to the chair, then back up to the blonde witch. Hermione's lips began to move as she worked herself into a rant. Anything Hermione was about to say was stalled quite suddenly as her chair quite suddenly ceased to exist, leaving the poor witch to fight vainly with the laws of gravity moments before falling on her butt. Standing, Luna peeked over the edge of the table.

"That wasn't very nice, using your logic to prove that chair did not exist." Luna lamented, her voice thick with sadness at the loss of a chair. "It was in the prime of its life too."

Disclaimer: Not all that good and I wouldn't advise you to expect much.

## Backwater

Harry's eyes shot open. His sleep had been disturbed by another vision of his arch nemesis. It appeared that Voldemort was sending his followers to kill an old man and Harry was tired of standing by to allow the snake faced bugger to get his way.

It took five tries before Harry felt a rush of magic telling him that his attempt at portkey creation was a success. "I hope this works," Harry said nervously as the device activated.

He arrived to a scene of carnage. There were several Death Eaters fighting with men in black suits and to Harry's surprise, the men in the black suits were winning.

Harry crouched behind a large tree stunning any Death Eater that got within range until the fight ended.

"Drop the wand and put your hands on your head," a cold voice said from behind. "Do it or I will fire."

"Can I put it on the ground slowly?" Harry asked. "I don't want to damage it."

"Very slowly," the voice agreed.

"Thanks." Harry complied with the voice's instructions and soon felt handcuffs closing around his wrists.

They led him to a small windowless room and Harry spend several hours telling and retelling the grim faced men of how and why he'd come to be involved in the fight between them and the Death Eaters.

"One more time son," the grim faced man began. "Why did you decide . . ." he stiffened and looked at Harry for a few seconds. "Never mind, it looks like your story checks out."

"Can I leave then?" Harry asked.

"Not just yet," the man said. "Someone wishes to speak with you before we decide what happens next."  
"Who?" Harry asked.

The door opened and the old man that was the target of the Death Eater assassination team walked in.

"Hello Harry," an old man with a kind smile said as he entered the interrogation room. "I understand that you were trying to save me?"

"Yes sir," Harry agreed. "I didn't know that your guards would be able to do it for you . . . um . . ."

"You're wondering why most of them weren't using magic?"

"That and why they were using unforgivables sir," Harry said nervously.

"Unfor . . . ah, the killing curse. It's not illegal here so long as it's used in self defense," the old man explained. "As for why they were able to use magic, well that's because the Secret Service has a high percentage of magic users. While they usually guard the President and his family, as a candidate I'm also entitled to their protection."

"Can I ask you something sir?"

"Of course Harry," the old man agreed.

"Why were the Death Eaters after you?"

"Because I'm not magical," the old man said with a laugh. "I did however serve on the Senate select committee for Magical affairs and I suppose they didn't want someone that knew so much about the magical world taking the presidency."

"Presidency?" Harry said with a frown.

"You didn't know?" The man seemed amused. "My name is Senator Snuffy and it is quite likely that I will be President Snuffy after the election next month . . . well, I hope it is anyway."

"Oh . . . what now?"

"I've spoken to the President and I've spoken to State," the Senator said. "And you've been given asylum if you want it. I've also seen the Canadian Ambassador and he's agreed to extend it if you'd feel more comfortable in a Commonwealth country, he also mentioned that it was likely that the Australians and the New Zealanders would likely offer it if asked."

AN: Basic idea is my version of the cliché that Europe is a backwards bunch of morons so far as the rest of the magical world is concerned. Harry saved Senator Snuffy, or rather Harry tried to save Senator Snuffy. President Resident is the President in Harry Potter world as I'd rather side step politics if I write this. While I enjoy arguing Politics this isn't the venue. And while I may start a blog for that at some point to indoctrinate the world into my radical agenda, that time has not come.

Couple of Omake for Family Affairs in Chapter 61

Omake by: Tommy King

Draco Malfoy had, as usual returned home for the Yule holiday, it had taken some fixing by his father to allow him to go home after the Ball, but a 'family emergency' had come up.

It was just after breakfast and Draco was pacing up and down outside his father's study, an amused Lucius watching him using a surveillance spell, and after thirty minutes decided to put an end as watching his son was losing it's entertainment value.

He shouted "Come in" and waited for his son.

Lucius had read some Muggle psychology although he would deny Muggles having anything worthwhile to contribute and indicated to his son to sit in front of his desk. The desk was set up in such a way that there was a large gap between Lucius and whoever was talking to him and the visitor's chair was lower than his, automatically giving him the dominant position.

"Well then, boy, what has your britches in a knot?" he asked condescendingly. Over the years he had been subjected to his son moaning about Potter and Granger and many other smarter students and his empty boasting about getting one up on the Weasleys, as if that was something to be proud of, after all it was Draco's grandfather who was responsible for the Weasley's plight.

"Ron Weasley," started Draco and Lucius struggled to stop himself from rolling his eyes. "He might be more into Pureblood ideals than we thought, there was a rumour he was going to the Ball with someone he was really serious about, he turned up with his sister! Why don't I have a sister to sleep with, how can I outdo him in keeping the family line pure, I have no female relatives but mother and I can't marry her because she's already married."

Lucius looked into his son's eyes and a shiver ran down his spine, he shuddered at the plans he saw and decided that Mad-eye Moody had the right idea, only eat and drink food he'd personally seen prepared, 'Time to father a spare and get Snape to arrange a Potions accident' he thought as he tuned out the rest of his son's ravings.

Omake by: davidiusbrown

As the dance wound down, Ron and Ginny were outside the castle, walking down a lighted path.

"Do you really think that Hermione may be out here?" Ginny asked.

Ron replied. "I don't know, but I don't like the way Krum was eying her. He's up to something, I know."

Suddenly, a crying Pansy Parkinson ran down the path yelling, "Draco! You bastard!" She ran right into Ron's shoulder. His body twisting, Ron fell, taking Ginny down with him.

Before they could get up, or even say anything, they were interrupted.

"Ah, Mr. Weasley, and Miss Weasley. This is so very interesting." Ron was lying flat on his back. Ginny was straddled atop him, her dress hiked up well past her knees, her head lying on Ron's chest.

"Twenty-five points from Gryffindor. Each. For your public display of affection."

Ron said, "That's it. We're dead."

"Mum's not going to like this." Ginny said, shivering against Ron.

Snape replied. "Don't assume that Miss Weasley. I imagine that something like this had to have happened before. Some families have their...traditions. Have you ever wondered why your mother's hair is the same Weasley red as yours?"

Disclaimer: More of an expanded Omake then a fic.

Genocide

It was the middle of the first week and everyone had gathered in the Great Hall for their afternoon meal. When suddenly, Draco let out a heart rendering scream.

"Draco, what's wrong?" Pansy asked. "Are you alright?"

"Pansy?" He croaked, "you're alive."

"Of course I am Draco."

"What about Granger and Weasley?" Draco demanded. "Lovegood, Longbottom, the others?"

"They're all fine too," Pansy said oddly. "Unfortunately."

"Thank god," Draco said in relief.

"What's going on Draco?"

"Things were desperate," Draco said in a hollow voice. "We were being hunted like animals. Magic . . . magic was dying and it was all our fault."

"What happened?" Daphne demanded. She wasn't sure she believed the idiot, but it couldn't hurt to keep up appearance.

"The Dark Lord returned and fulfilled his every promise," Draco said with a nostalgic smile. "We had them on the run, every day more and more of them fell."

"And he turned on us?" Tracy guessed.

"No . . . no, we made a terrible mistake." Draco said with a shiver. "We cornered what was left of the Order in an old house and gave them five seconds to surrender . . . they refused."

"So?"

"So we set the place on fire," Draco continued. "The Dark Lord even cast a charm that would keep the flames cool and the air good so as to draw things out. They screamed for hours before they finally succumbed to their wounds."

"Sounds glorious."

"It was," Draco agreed. "We found Granger and the Weasel in the basement, they'd been killed when the house collapsed and their faces were twisted into expressions of horror. It was a miracle that they were still recognizable and the Dark Lord saw his chance to break the sole survivor."

"What happened?"

"He took their heads and sent them to Potter," Draco said with a smile. "We weren't sure why he wasn't with the others, but it didn't matter. We figured that it would only increase the fun and we laughed when we pictured him reading our note that questioned his courage for abandoning his friends to die."

"Potter didn't break?"

"He did," Draco said with a look of fear. "He dropped the veneer of civilization that he had shown the world and we learned what he was truly capable of. Women, children, the elderly, even neutrals were all hunted. Potter didn't seem to care, it was like everything he cared about was gone leaving nothing he wished to save."

"Surely one man . . ."

"He was no man," Draco snapped. "He was a demon, a Dark Lord above all others. He . . . he used to take his victims to the burnt patch of ground where his friends died when he tired of them. There he would impale them." Draco paused to take a calming breath. "There he would impale them to keep their comrades company. We put up charms to prolong the suffering of his friends and he returned the favor one hundred fold. They'd be there for months, years in some cases before they were allowed to die."

"This can't be true."



"If only it weren't," Draco said wistfully. "In the end, there were four of us left. We knew it was only a matter of time before Potter came for us and we had originally planned to beat him to the punch. To kill ourselves to deny him the satisfaction of doing it himself, but plans change."

"You came back."

"It was pure luck we found the spell," Draco said. "The lives and magic of the others providing just enough power to send me back. We . . . we drew lots to see who would do it and I came up short."

"What do you mean came up short?"

"They were the lucky ones," Draco said with a dreamy smile, "they've escaped him. I had to come back here to face him again . . . to try to prevent him from ever deciding to get his revenge."

Draco refused to elaborate on his statements and that night he snuck out of the castle to enact the first part of his plan.

From Hogsmead, he took a public floo to Diagon and managed to rush into Gringotts moments before the bank closed its doors for the night.

"What do you want Hu-mon?" The goblin demanded.

"I need to speak with Ragnok," Draco sneered. "Hurry up about it you stinking goblin."

"No one speaks with Ragnok without an appointment."

"Unless you get me a meeting with him right now, then I am going to withdraw the entire Malfoy fortune. Then the Greengrass fortune is going to be withdrawn, followed by . . . well, several others. Don't forget your place scum, you only have what power we choose to give you."

"I shall speak to my superiors," the goblin said sourly.

"You do that," Draco said smugly. After an hour of waiting while the goblins decided how to respond and another three to show that their time was much too important to waste on a smelly human, Draco finally had his meeting.

"What did you want human?" Ragnok barked.

"You need to prevent the Dark Lord from taking absolute power," Draco replied. "Above all you need to keep Potter's friends alive."

"Why should I do that?" Ragnok sneered.

"Because if you don't, then Potter will end your people."

"Is that a threat?"

"No, it's a prophecy you simpering moron."

"I'm suppose to believe this?"

Draco smiled cruelly and barked a short phrase in Gobbledegook. "You had me memorize that, I've got no idea what it means."

"Tell me more," the suddenly sick looking goblin demanded.

"What's in it for me?"

"I'll protect Potter," Ragnok spat. "Now tell me more."

"You'll protect Potter because it's what's best for you," Draco laughed. "Now, what's in it for me?"

AN: First part was posted as an omake.

Mini Omake:

"Malfoy," Harry said flatly.

"P . . . P . . . P . . . Potter," Draco said quickly. "I . . . I've got to be going."

Disclaimer: You can't pick your relatives, so you must console yourself with the thought that you can you can kill them.

Luna Malfoy Lovegood

"Harry, may I have a word with you in private?" Luna asked as the DA meeting drew to a close.

"Sure Luna," Harry agreed. "What is it?"

Well." Luna waited quietly until the last student had left the room. "I was wondering if you'd be interested in significantly weakening Voldemort's forces?"

"How?"

"As many as three murders and as few as one," Luna replied. "Depending on your godfather."

"Why don't you explain?" Harry said, it was not a request.

"You know how important Lucius Malfoy is to to Voldemort don't you?" Luna asked intently. "Wars are won by gold after all . . ."

"And Malfoy has a lot of gold," Harry sighed. "So you're saying we should kill him?"

"At a minimum," Luna agreed. "Unless you can find a way to neutralize Narcissa and Draco without killing them then they will have to go as well."

"I take it that you have a way to do that don't you?" Harry asked calmly, Luna had dropped her mask and Harry figured that it would be polite to do the same.

"Your godfather Sirius is the head of the Black family," Luna explained. "If he were to relinquish his position to you then you would have the power do dissolve Lucius's marriage to Narcissa."

"Why?"

"It was a political match to enhance the power of both families, the Malfoy is a rich and upcoming house while the Black family is on the decline. Lucius could of course remarry Narcissa or adopt Draco into his family unless . . ."

"He was dead," Harry sighed.

"The timing would be the tricky part," Luna mused. "It would all have to be done in the same day . . . in the same hour if possible."

"What would happen to the Malfoy fortune then?" Harry asked.

"It would go to the closest blood relative, Lucius Malfoy's niece . . . me."

"You?"

"Lucius was my mother's older brother," Luna said with a cold smile. "I won't miss him."

"I see."

"Not to mention the fact that it will cause my poor cousin Draco no end to trouble when his status as a pureblood is gone."

"Really, how? Won't he still be a pureblood."

"Well . . . Harry, the first thing you have to know is that there are different levels of pureblood. Status is based on a combination of money and how long you can trace your magical line. The Potter family for example is about the middle of both, while the Weasley family has a long line but no money."

"What about the Malfoy family?"

"High on money but it's a relatively new family," Luna replied. "Which is why Lucius married Narcissa, the Black family has no money but the Ancient in their motto is not just for show like the noble is. Lucky thing really, if it weren't for that then we wouldn't be able to go through with this plan."

“What do you mean?”

“The marriage of Lucius Malfoy and Narcissa Black sealed the alliance between the families,” Luna explained. “Breaking the alliance would cause some . . . bad things to happen, very bad things. You can, or I should say that you'd be able as Head of House Black, dissolve Narcissa and Lucius's marriage. You would then have to arrange a new marriage between a member of House Black and House Malfoy.”

“What?”

“You could marry me . . . or have Sirius do it I suppose,” Luna mused. “If we do things correctly then Draco will be frozen out and the only person able to fulfill the agreement on the Malfoy side is me. The only ones on the other side are yourself and Sirius . . . unless Nymphadora can transform all the way, I'm not sure if that would work but it's a possibility.”

“We have to get married?”

“I have to get married,” Luna corrected. “You have a bit of wiggle room, I'd prefer it to be you but . . .”

“I need to think about this,” Harry said with a shudder. “I can't just . . . I need to think about this.”

“I understand Harry,” Luna sighed in disappointment. “But please agree, even if you don't want me yourself, please agree to this.”

“Why is this so important to you?”

“Because by and large, Malfoys don't die in accidents.”

“I don't . . . your mother?”

“Was a threat,” Luna agreed. “And so were you and so am I.”

“Me?”

"Sirius named you his heir about a week after you were born," Luna said calmly. "Lucius lost the court case to have his son named heir to the Black family the week before my mother died . . . as chance would have it, he also stopped petitioning to have Sirius given the kiss the same week."

"You're saying he's responsible for Sirius being put in Azkaban?" Harry asked intently. "And for the death of your mum?"

"I'm saying that members of the Malfoy family don't tend to die in accidents," Luna said firmly. "And that that was a particularly convenient week for my dear Uncle. I'm not saying any more than that, I will say however that it was what convinced the Hat to put me in Ravenclaw."

"Why?"

"Slytherin Luna is a threat, but not a large one. With Snape in control of the house she won't be difficult to break or dispose of," Luna spoke in an odd tone. "Gryffindor Luna is just as bad, courageous but also a black mark on the Malfoy name, she'll have to come to some misfortune. Hufflepuff Luna is also bad, but since she never really had friends it wasn't much of a possibility. Ravenclaw Luna on the other hand . . . she's not as bad as the other three but she'll have to work to convince the world that she's harmless, not too hard mind you, Ravenclaws have now common sense and wouldn't look under the surface of something if they didn't have to."

So that's why you're always doing odd things," Harry said.

"Loony Lovegood isn't a threat," Luna explained with a shrug. "And no one takes her seriously, you'd be surprised what people will say around you when they think you won't understand what they say. Much the same way that innocent and good Harry gets overlooked, no one questions it."

"I'm in," Harry said suddenly. He smiled, it wasn't a nice smile, it was the smile of a boy who'd spent ten years living in a cupboard and working as a slave. "I presume you have a plan . . . wife?"

"Not yet beloved," Luna giggled. "I can't wait to see the look on Draco's face when he realizes he doesn't have a name."

"What's that mean?"

"Like I said before, there are different levels of pureblood. When the marriage is dissolved then Draco loses the Malfoy name, unless you're willing to take him into the Black family then he drops to the lowest rung of the pureblood pecking order."

"So what am I then?" Harry asked. "I thought since I was a half blood that . . ." he trailed off upon seeing her smile.

"You're different," Luna said with a frown. "You're a wild card, one can insert you into any level without too much difficulty. One must remember that you are not simply Harry Potter, you are also 'the-boy-who-lived' and that is a title that carries quite a bit of weight."

"I see, so where do we start?"

"You're going to need at least one mistress," Luna mused. "I've worked up a short list of possible candidates but the decision is of course yours."

"Why do I need a mistress?" Harry demanded.

"Social standing," Luna explained. "You don't actually have to do anything with her . . . or him I suppose, but you need to maintain at least one to show that you can afford the expense."

"What about you?"

"It's tolerated so long as I'm discreet and wait until after your heir is born," Luna replied. "It's accepted after your heir has a heir of his own, why do you ask?"

"What?"

"Oh Harry, I wasn't planning to have a boyfriend on the side. You don't have to worry about that."

"Then why do you want me to have a girl on the side?" Harry demanded.

"I told you," Luna sighed in exasperation. "Social standing. You'll look like a saint if you marry poor Looney Lovegood, you'll look like an idiot if you don't have someone on the side to keep you relaxed."

"Why should I care about social standing?" Harry said with what Luna thought to be an adorable pout.

"Because like it or not you are an icon," Luna explained. "If we can provide you as an alternate to Voldemort then I'm sure we can get at least a few of the families to side with you, if we can start a credible rumor that one of Voldemort's grand parents was a muggle or something along those lines then we may be able to lure a few families away from his side. None of that is possible if you don't go through the correct motions."

"Why?"

"Because the more people on our side the faster this war will end in our favor," Luna said in exasperation. "The less we have the faster it will end in their favor."

"No, I mean why should we start a rumor that one of Voldemort's grandparents was a muggle?"

"Because it'll make him less palatable to the purebloods," Luna said slowly. "Would you like me to explain that?"

"Why should we start a rumor if we can prove that one of his parents was a muggle?"

"What?" Luna asked in shock.

"His father was a muggle," Harry said. "Didn't you know that?"

"You can prove this?" She asked intently.

"Shouldn't be too difficult," Harry agreed.



"Oh . . ." Luna went cross eyed and she shuddered in pleasure.  
"Harry, you know just what to say to a girl don't you?"

IIIIIIII

For the past several days, Hermione had been alternating between annoyed and confused. Harry had been acting odd and spending a lot of time around Luna. At first she'd figured that the two of them had finally discovered their hormones and she was honestly happy that they had picked up a new hobby. But then she started noticing little things that threw off her original theory and that made her confused. Hermione had always hated being confused so that made her annoyed, after calming she again considered her friend's odd behavior which made her confused and restarted the entire cycle. So it was no surprise that she had jumped at the chance when Harry had requested that she make time for a serious discussion, the fact that the discussion with Luna Lovegood with all people was threatening to push her into confusion again.

"Have a seat please," Luna said as Hermione walked into the room.  
"Did Harry tell you why I wished to meet with you?"

"No Luna," Hermione replied. Automatically, her hand reached for her wand, whoever this was it was not Luna Lovegood. "He didn't." Well, she thought, that explained that.

"I am Luna, Hermione," Luna said. "And you should learn to hide your emotions better . . . I had to."

"Oh." Hermione relaxed a tad. Making sure to keep her wand accessible, she regarded the other girl with a guarded look. "What's this about Luna?"

"Harry is going to marry me" Luna said calmly. "I wanted to know if you would like a position in our household."

"What?" Hermione squawked.

"It's because of an arrangement between our families," Luna explained. "The benefits are rather large and consequences of ignoring it are rather dire."

"That's barbaric." Hermione was appalled.

"Barbaric or not, it's what is going to happen." Luna sighed.  
"Hermione, I would like you to promise to hear me out."

"About what Luna?"

"Promise."

"Ok, I promise to listen to you."

"Good," Luna said with a satisfied smile. "Now as I said, I'd like you to consider taking a position in our household. Harry has grown to depend on your assistance and I do not believe that he could live without it at this time, before you agree you should know that no matter what your title might be, people will assume that you are Harry's mistress."

"Luna I'd never . . ."

"Don't say never," Luna interrupted. "Because one of the positions I'd like you to consider taking is the position of Harry's mistress . . . one of them anyway."

"Mistress?" Hermione squeaked.

"It's expected that a wizard of his social standing will have at least one mistress," Luna said calmly. "Or a stable of boys I suppose . . . it's not important which. Before you say anything, I think you should know that you don't actually have to do anything and you would have several opportunities that would otherwise not exist."

"What do you mean by opportunities?"

"A muggleborn which can marry, may be able to find a low level position in the Ministry if she knows who to be 'friendly' to, leave the magical world as most do, or become the kept woman of a rich wizard. If she chooses the latter then several career choices open up to her. Wouldn't want to annoy her patron after all."

"I had no idea that magical society was so . . . so . . ."

"Bigoted? Insular? Backward?" Luna suggested. "Didn't you ever wonder why Arthur Weasley held the position he did? Didn't you ever wonder why our Muggle Studies Professor was a proper pureblood rather than a muggle born?"

"It never . . . I didn't . . ."

"You were too distracted by how wonderful magic is and you never thought to look under the surface," Luna said gently. "All I am saying is that Harry needs you, you wouldn't have to . . . to do things with him if you didn't want to, and it would be to your benefit to agree to my proposal."

"You're supposed to be his wife Luna," Hermione said in distress. "Why are you asking me to do these things?"

"Our match is not based on love," Luna began. Suddenly the girl looked very vulnerable. "I hope it will be . . . I certainly like Harry, he . . . he was nice to me when not many people are. I want Harry to be happy to be with me and I want to defeat Voldemort, your presence will help with both of those goals."

AN: While this could be a harem fic I don't see it as one. The mistress thing does have some basis in history which is why I included it, if this ever got written I'd have to remember to include several other things that serve only to prove social standing such as owning an expensive country home, being a patron of the arts, or any number of classical Victorian occupations for Gentlemen of means. If you don't show how rich you are then you loose points.

Mini Omake: Luna

Luna took a deep breath and then let it out slowly. Harry had given her something she'd never thought she'd be able to achieve on her own, something she'd wanted since she was a small girl. He'd given her a means to avenge her mother. Luna Lovegood was an odd girl by all accounts, but she always paid her debts and as far as she was concerned, she owed Harry everything. With a silent nod, she resolved to do everything in her power to make their match a happy one. Even if her friend was trapped in a loveless marriage, it didn't mean he couldn't have diversions

Omake: Gabrielle

"Ello 'Arrie," a strange girl with platinum hair said with an angry frown. "Did you think I 'ouldn't find out?"

"Who . . . find out what?"

"Why did you not contact me 'Arrie?" The girl flipped from angry to sad in the blink of an eye. "Am I not good enough for you?"

"Gabrielle?" Harry ventured.

"Yes 'Arrie," the girl agreed. "Well?"

"You've grown up," Harry said with a grin. "What are you angry about?"

"Why did you not contact me?" The girl demanded. "If you wanted a mistresses then I 'ould be 'appy to fill the position . . . any position you like."

"I . . . but . . . huh?"

AN: Something to be thrown in if it were a harem fic. Gonna have to do more with Gabrielle in the future, she can be a fun character.

Omake by Sergey Tsvetkov

"Harry has to get a mistress?" Hermione was furious.

An hour, many words and a couple of 'Reparos' later...

"Ooo-key, Harry'll need a mistress." Hermione stated. "We need to research it and make a list."

"You are right. But I've made a list already."

"Let me..." Hermione snatched a scroll from Luna's hand. "Hmmm... Not bad... Good choice... This one would not work... mmm... Luna?"

"Yes, Hermione?"

"Uhm... Is there a reason why I am not listed? Not that I'm interested, just curious..."

"Well... For Harry you could be a good choice. And the fact that you are muggleborn is also in favor. But I don't think that you'd have made a good mistress. Being mistress requires certain education, certain qualifications..."

"What... Education? Not qualified? Are you saying..."

Luna smiled. The problem of the mistress has been solved.

Omake by Ben Russell-Gough

"Ron? This might sound odd but... How would you and Dean like to be my muscle? The way I see it, you are both individually smarter than Malfoy, Crabbe and Goyle put together /and/ are nice, big lads. I think you would be ideal combinations of visible menace and actual ability."

Disclaimer: A tribute to one of the greats.

Team Hedgehog

"May I have a moment of your time Minerva?"

"Who?" The woman turned. "Larry? What are you doing back at Hogwarts?"

"I was hoping to have a moment of your time," he said quietly, "now I realize that you don't like me very much . . ."

"I didn't like your grades in Transfiguration," McGonagall interrupted. "But I never had a problem with you."

"But . . . the wedding . . ."

"My fight with my daughter wasn't because I disapproved of her marriage to you," Minerva said quickly, "I was disappointed that she'd thought I'd disapprove of her marriage to you."

"And then you were both too bloody stubborn to work things out," Larry sighed.

"She gets it from her mother," Minerva said proudly, "as I got it from mine. The tradition of naming out daughters after the moon isn't the only thing that gets passed along."

"I see . . . well the baby is going to be born any time now and I was hoping . . ."

"Baby?" Minerva asked sharply. "I'm going to be a grandmother and nobody told me?"

"I thought you knew?"

"Well I don't," Minerva sighed, "come along then."

"Where are we going?"

"To wherever my daughter is," McGonagall replied. "Don't dawdle."

"Yes Professor," he agreed cheerfully.

Two years later . . .

"That simply won't do," Minerva said with a frown, "if Luna gives you half as much trouble as you gave me at her age then you're never going to be able to do any research and properly watch her at the same time."

"What do you suggest then mother?" She asked through clenched teeth.

"Why don't I send one of the school elves along to watch Luna so you can devote more time to your work." Minerva said. "And . . . perhaps I could come occasionally and lend a hand?" She added somewhat hopefully.

"Thank you mother," Selene Lovegood said happily, "that will be quite helpful."

Several years after that . . .

Minerva was sitting in her office grading papers when a frantic house elf popped in.

"Professy Minnie, is horrible."

"What is it Snappy?" Minerva asked intently.

"Missy Seleene is sick."

"Tell Poppy to meet me at the Lovegood House," Minerva called over her shoulder as she left in a dead run.

Minerva arrived in her daughters house to find Luna weeping over the fallen form of Selene Lovegood.

"Step back child," Minerva said. A chill went through her body as she reached down to check her daughter's pulse. "She's going to be just fine," Minerva said in relief. Casting the few healing charms she knew,

Minerva did her best to stabilize her daughter as she waited for the school healer to arrive.

|||||||

The head of the tiny Lovegood family rushed into St. Mungos and nearly plowed into his mother in law.

"Is she?" Larry was white faced.

"She's alive," Minerva said tightly, holding little Luna in her lap, "she just won't wake up."

"I wouldn't worry about it," an old woman sauntered in smoking a pipe, "poor dear just needs a chance to get a bit of rest I'm sure." Distance and lack of familiarity moderating the woman's normal attitude to the females that had the misfortune to marry into her family.

"Nanny," Luna jumped off Minerva's lap and threw herself into the arms of the other old woman.

"Gytha," Minerva said tightly.

"Minerva," Gytha replied cheerfully.

The years past, and while Selene did eventually come out of her coma. The road to recovery was a long one and so Larry's grandmother ended up spending quite a bit of time with the youngest Lovegood.

"What do you want Luna?"

"I want to go to Hogwarts this year and I want to have a pet hedgehog," Luna said shyly.

"Sensible," Nanny said cheerfully, "but how are you going to get those things? You're a year too young for Hogwarts and they don't allow pet hedgehogs."

"Um?" Luna's nose scrunched up.

"Why don't I show you?" Nanny suggested. "But I'll need your help."



"Ok Nanny," Luna agreed.

"All you need to say is . . ."

Several hours later . . .

"What?" Minerva asked sickly.

"Nanny's going to teach me how to be a proper witch," Luna chirped.

"None of that silly wand waving for our gel," Nanny agreed.

"But our family has been going to Hogwarts since the first class," Minerva protested.

"All the more reason to try something new," Nanny retorted, "right Luna?"

"Right," Luna agreed.

"I . . . but . . . I . . ." Minerva sputtered.

"Shame she couldn't learn both," Nanny sighed, watching Minerva out of the corner of her eye, "if only Hogwarts started a year earlier."

"Why?" Minerva seized the chance to get her granddaughter into her school.

"I wouldn't want any special treatment," Nanny said quickly. Like hell she wouldn't. "So it's best just to forget about the whole thing."

"It's no special treatment," Minerva said quickly, "just a form that has to be signed by her father."

"Well," Nanny said slowly to twist the knife. "I suppose if she were to go a year earlier then she'd graduate a year earlier. So then she'd still be young enough to learn my trade . . . might even be better that way," she mused.

"Done," Minerva said firmly, "you hear that Luna? You're going to Hogwarts."

"Can I bring my pet hedgehog?" Luna asked, looking up at her grandmother with wide innocent eyes. "I don't want to go if I can't bring my hedgehog."

"Hedgehog?"

"Every proper witch needs a familiar," Gytha said primly.

"I suppose we could arrange permission," Minerva agreed.

"Yay," Luna cheered.

Which was how Luna came to attend Hogwarts a year early along with her pet hedgehog.

The first day of school . . .

"Come along Luna," Minerva said to the young girl by her side, "you'll want to be on the train early to get a good spot."

"Ok grammy," Luna agreed. Her face was set into a stern look mirroring the older woman until her attention was captured by a dingy looking boy. Pulling away from her Grandmother, she walked up to the boy and began examining him. "Hello," she said to the strange boy. "Why are you just standing here? Are you waiting for someone?"

"No," Harry said, "I'm looking for Platform nine and three quarters."

"Luna," Minerva called out when she noticed the small girl had left her side, "there you are. Who's your friend." She gasped when the undersized boy looked up with emerald green eyes. "Harry Potter."

"You know him grammy?"

"I knew his parents," Minerva said absently, "come along children." She tried to cover the horror she felt at the boy's appearance. "The Hogwarts express won't wait for late students."

"Ok grammy," Luna agreed. She seized the boy's hand and dragged him through the barrier.

The Sorting . . .

"But there is no Hedgehog house," the hat protested.

"I don't care," Luna maintained stubbornly, "I wanna be in Hedgehog house . . . and Harry too," she added as an afterthought. She'd finally found a friend and Nanny had always said that if you find a good man then you're to get your hooks into him and not let him go until you felt like it, and she didn't 'felt' like it yet.

"How about Hufflepuff, then? A badger is, if you squint a bit, something like a hedgehog." The Hat cajoled.

"No," Luna said stubbornly.

AN: Swordchucks gave me the line about Badgers looking like Hedgehogs if you squint. Half outline but it's been sitting on my HD for a while and I wanted to get it out, so I gave it a rough polish and slapped it together.

Disclaimer: Uh . . . do I have to say that it's illegal in most of the world?

A Diplomatic Affair Expanded

"Hello Minerva."

"Headmaster."

"I apologize for interrupting your class like this but I'm afraid I'm going to have to borrow Mr. Potter for a bit."

"You're excused from class Mr. Potter," Minerva warmed a bit to say. "I'm sure Ms. Granger will be kind enough to let you see her notes and to pick up your homework."

"Of course I will Professor McGonagall," Hermione agreed quickly.

"Go on Mr. Potter."

Harry got up out of his chair and walked out of the room. "What's this about sir?"

"You are aware of the fact that I hold a number of positions both here and abroad?"

"Yes?"

"Have you wondered why I never chose to exert my influence as the Supreme Mugwump of the International Confederation of Wizards to help our cause?"

"I always assumed that . . . yes sir."

"It's ok to doubt me Harry," Dumbledore said kindly. "I understand that your friend Ron thinks that I'm completely off my rocker."

"Yes sir."

"The truth is that the International Confederation of Wizards sounds very impressive, but has little actual power." Dumbledore sighed. "Especially now that the majority of its members . . . former members

rather have chosen to leave it. At the moment, it's little more than a grouping of European countries and a few former colonies that have chosen to stay out of respect to their former masters."

"What's this all have to do with me sir?"

"Harry . . . you realise how extraordinary your survival was do you not?"

"Bloody boy who lived," Harry muttered in disgust.

"Precisely," Dumbledore agreed. "I hate to ask you, but your fame could open several doors that have been closed off for centuries in some cases. Harry . . . earlier today I received an invitation to a diplomatic function in the Sultanate of Doha."

"So?"

"So it stated that I was only welcome if I came as your guest," Dumbledore explained. "It is your decision of course but . . ."

"I'll do it," Harry said firmly. "What do I have to do?"

"Just mingle," Dumbledore said with twinkling eyes. "I'll take care of the rest."

"Yes sir, will everyone speak English?"

"There will be a charm put up to allow mutual comprehension," Dumbledore said dryly. "Though I'm told that it sometimes makes . . . odd errors in translation so do not take anything you hear too seriously."

"I understand, should I change into my formal robes?"

"Yes you should," Dumbledore agreed. "As should I come to think of it, meet me in the great hall when you've finished."

Harry walked back to his dorm and grabbed a quick shower before changing and rejoining the Headmaster in the great hall.

"Ready Harry?"

"Yes sir."

"Good." He handed Harry a long wrapped object. "Put this on and we can be on our way."

"The sword of Gryffindor?" Harry asked in shock.

"You earned the right to wear it Harry," Dumbledore explained. "Now shall we go?"

"Yes sir." Harry quickly buckled on the sword and touched the portkey.

They appeared in front of an unpleasant looking man.

"Name?" He asked flatly.

"Harry Potter."

"Ah Mr. Potter, so good of you to accept our invitation."

"Thank you."

"Harry Potter and Guest," the man announced. "Go right in Mr. Potter." He motioned Harry towards a large opening that seemed to hang in the air.

Harry walked in and was dazzled by the sheer number of people and by their odd outfits. Drifting over to the punch bowl, Harry poured himself a drink and watched the crowd.

"Excuse me."

"Yes sir?" Harry replied. He turned to find an asian gentleman giving him an unreadable look.

"Do you know how to use that sword on your hip?"

"No sir."

"Then why are you wearing it?" He demanded.

"Because it saved my life."

"I see," the man seemed to calm. "My name is Ichiro Yamamoto."

"Harry Potter."

"Could you explain how it saved your life?"

"I stabbed it through the roof of a snake's mouth," Harry said. "It was mostly luck and I had a lot of help."

"What kind of snake?" Ichiro asked professionally. "And how large?"

"A basilisk," Harry said. "Not sure how large it was, I'm sure it looked bigger then it was and I wasn't in any condition to take measurements after the fight was over with."

"I understand, may I see the blade?"

Harry carefully drew the blade and held it flat on his hands for the man to take.

"Good steel," he said after a moment of examination. "A bit gaudy but functional."

"It is that," Harry agreed. "I . . . how'd you do that?" Harry asked in shock, the sword had shifted to more functional and less ascetic form.

"I suspect it was acting on your desire," Ichiro replied. "Take your sword back Harry."

"Thank you sir."

"Ichiro."

"Ichiro then."

"Would you like to learn to use this blade? To bring it honor in battle?"

"I would," Harry allowed. "But I'm not sure how I'd go about it."

"I have a gift that would help you learn," Ichiro said with a smile. "And in taking it you would be doing me a great favor."

"It's not dangerous is it?"

"Not to you," Ichiro said quickly. "But it could be to those that wish you harm."

"And it would be doing you a favor?" Harry felt that he should consult with Dumbledore before making any agreements, but it seemed harmless enough.

"You would."

"Then I accept, thank you sir."

"Thank you Harry," Ichiro said with a large grin. "So where are you from?"

"The United Kingdom," Harry said. "England to be precise."

"Really? I hear it rains there quite a bit."

"Sometimes," Harry agreed with a laugh. "What about your home? Where are you from?"

"I am from the nation of Nippon, Daimyo of a small and out of the way Provence of no consequence."

"I'd like to see it some day," Harry said suddenly. "I've never left the United Kingdom before today and I'd love to do some traveling."

"Of course you shall visit it one day," Ichiro said quickly. "You are welcome to visit at any time and I will be happy to offer hospitality, humble though it may be."

"I wish I could offer the same," Harry said weakly. "But I don't even have a humble home, I'd be happy to show you around if they let me though."

"Thank you Harry, I shall keep that in mind. Have you had a chance to meet our host the Sultan of Doha?"

"Not yet."



"Then come with me, he's a friend of mine and would be delighted to hear the story of what happened with the snake. I'd like to hear a few of the details too come to think of it."

Harry spent the rest of the night telling and being told stories of adventure and misfortune and before he knew it, the party was winding down and Dumbledore was at his elbow.

"Time to go Harry."

"Yes sir," Harry agreed.

"All in all I believe that it was a successful night," Dumbledore said thoughtfully. "I received some promising leads anyway."

"Good."

"Come with me, we have one more thing to do before we can return to Hogwarts."

"What's that?"

"Our host will present us with a small gift, something to remember the night."

"Oh."

"The important thing is to accept the gift and thank the host for the thought," Dumbledore continued. "Rejecting it would be a rather large insult."

"I understand sir."

"Good, this way Harry." They walked towards the door and Harry could see the servants passing small boxes to the guests as they left.

"Leaving Harry?" A man a few years older than Harry asked as they approached the door.

"Yeah Aliyy," Harry agreed. "It was a great party though."

"Your highness," Dumbledore said in shock. "I apologize for the familiar way he addressed you."

"Harry is a friend of mine," the Sultan said coldly. "And I would appreciate it if you did not interrupt our conversation."

"Of course," Dumbledore agreed quickly.

"So Harry, I understand that Ichiro gave you a rather impressive gift?"

"I suppose," Harry agreed. "He said it would be helpful in learning how to use the sword."

"I'm sure," Aliyy said with a smile. "And as he did it at my party, I can not allow him to upstage me." He gave a signal and one of the servants presented Harry with a jeweled bottle. "Treat her well, she is a bit strong willed and willful, but she has a good heart."

"Ok," a rather confused Harry agreed.

"Thank you Harry," the Sultan said with a smile. "Now if you will excuse me, I have something I must attend to personally."

"Goodbye Aliyy," Harry said to his friend.

"You never fail to amaze me Harry," Dumbledore said to himself. "Come Harry, we must be going." They stepped outside and Dumbledore held out a portkey. "Alright," he said after Harry had taken hold. "In three . . . two . . . one . . ." they reappeared in the Headmaster's office and Dumbledore turned to Harry with a smile. "Do you know what you've done Harry?"

"I . . ."

"You've single handedly done more in a short party then I've managed to do in years of trying," the old man was overjoyed. "Have you given any thought to a future career?"

"Not really," Harry answered honestly, "I thought maybe I could be an Auror."

"Well . . . perhaps you should give some thought to becoming a diplomat as well," Dumbledore suggested, "graduation from the Auror's academy would not hinder that career path and I dare say it could aid it."

"I'll think about it sir," Harry muttered.

"That's all I ask," Dumbledore said happily, "tired?"

"A bit."

"Then why don't you go to bed," he said in a grandfatherly tone, "and take tomorrow off if you like."

"Thank you sir," Harry said as he left, "I'll take you up on that . . . for the morning anyway."

Belatedly, Dumbledore realized that Harry's first class of the day was Double Potions with Slytherin House. "I'll never get those two to put aside their differences if they avoid each other like that," Dumbledore sighed, "perhaps I could arrange some sort of extra lessons?"

Harry ignored his fellow house mates as he walked through the common room and went to bed. Who knew a party could take so much energy? Harry thought as he closed his eyes and went to sleep.

Harry awoke the next morning and was momentarily confused by the extra lump he found in his arms. "The bottle Aliyy gave me?" Harry asked dumbly. "Must have taken it to bed with me," he carefully put it on his bedside table. "But I could have sworn . . . ah well, glad it didn't get damaged." Noticing a bit of dust on the gift, Harry reached up to brush it off but froze when his stomach rumbled. "Breakfast first then," he said to himself. "I'll clean you up later." He felt foolish speaking to the object but consoled himself with the fact that there were no witnesses.

The bottle seemed to blush as Harry left but as his back was to it, the boy failed to notice the odd sight.

Harry got to the Great Hall just as breakfast was winding to a close.

"You'd better eat fast," Hermione advised, "we have Potions in fifteen minutes."

"I'm excused from classes today," Harry muttered.

"You did get in rather late," Hermione mused, "what did Dumbledore want you for?"

"We went to a party in Dubai," Harry replied with a yawn, "he's trying to get some of the other countries to help us with Voldemort and he needed me to get an invitation."

"Why'd he need you?" Ron asked with a confused frown.

"Cause his titles don't mean much outside Europe," Harry replied, "and I'm the 'boy-who-lived' everywhere."

"Oh . . . so how was the party?"

"Spent most of the time hanging out in the corner with a couple people," Harry replied.

"Still don't like crowds?" Hermione asked sympathetically.

"Yeah," Harry agreed.

"Don't worry about it mate," Ron said with a grin, "people suck."

"Yeah," Hermione agreed, "don't feel bad about it Harry."

"Thanks guys."

"And if you like," Ron continued, "we can skivv off on classes too."

"We most certainly can not," Hermione said in outrage, "school is important . . . unless you want us to Harry," she added hesitantly.

"I'll be fine," Harry said, ignoring Ron's hopeful look. "Thanks guys." Harry walked back to his room and climbed into bed for a few more hours of sleep. Glancing up at the bottle, he remembered his 'promise' and rubbed off the dust before dropping his arm and going to sleep. Had he stayed awake for just a couple more seconds, he

would have beheld the odd sight of pink smoke pouring out of the bottle.

The smoke formed into a young girl who studied Harry with a blush on her face. "He isn't too bad I suppose," she mused, "better than some smelly goat herder."

"Who is you?" Dobby demanded. "You must not harm Harry Potter sir."

"Where did you come from?" She asked in surprise.

"Dobby always collects Harry Potter sir's laundry at this time," the house elf replied. "Who is you?"

"I'm his new genie," she explained. "I'm here to ensure his happiness."

"So . . . so you is Harry Potter sir's servant?" Dobby asked in excitement.

"I am," the girl confirmed. She figured that was one way to explain her position.

"Oh Dobby knew that Harry Potter sir was a great and powerful wizard," Dobby cheered. "Finally others is realizing this."

"You wish to be his servant also?"

"Dobby's not worthy," the young elf cried. "Dobby's not worthy."

"I think the three of us should talk then," another voice said from the shadows, "I think we all have something in common."

Harry woke up a few hours later feeling refreshed and relaxed. "Just in time for lunch," he muttered to himself. Harry walked out of the Gryffindor tower and was joined by Hermione on the way to the Great Hall.

"How's your day off?" She asked.

"Great," he replied, "a few extra hours of sleep was exactly what I needed. We gonna wait for Ron?"

"I'm sure he's already in the Great Hall stuffing his face," Hermione said with a giggle, "helps that Divination is closer then the Runes classroom."

"Lucky for him." They rounded the corner and had the misfortune of running into Draco and the idiot duo.

"What's wrong Potter," Draco sneered, "get kicked out of Potions for being too much of an idiot?"

"Just ignore him," Hermione advised. She grabbed Harry's arm and began leading him away from the trio of Slytherins.

"You know," Harry said to her as they walked away, "I'm starting to think I need a better class of school yard nemesis."

"Those insults were rather weak," Hermione agreed, "I'll ask Daphne if she'd like the job when I see her in Runes tomorrow."

"Thanks Hermione," Harry laughed, "a nemesis that can tie their own shoes and read would be a major step up."

"Cirgraaak," Draco screamed.

Harry spun, wand in hand to meet the threat and was shocked to see Draco and his goons in a neat pile on the floor. "What in the . . ."

"Potter," Snape screamed, "I'll have you expelled for attacking your fellow students."

"I didn't do a thing," Harry said as his eyes scanned for threats.

"They're on the ground and your wand is in your hand," Snape sneered. "It's not hard to figure out what happened."

"Shut up," Harry said absently, "I'm trying to listen."

Snape's face became an unhealthy purple color and he began shaking in rage. "You . . ."

"Hear anything Mr. Potter?" McGonagall interrupted.

"No Professor," Harry said, "didn't hear a thing when whatever happened to them uh . . . happened. Just Draco trying to hex me and then he screamed, didn't even hear them fall to the ground."

"Very good Mr. Potter five points for being vigilant. Ms. Granger, five points to Gryffindor for watching Mr. Potter's back." McGonagall said, "carry on then."

"Yes Professor," Harry agreed.

"Thank you Professor," Hermione said happily.

"And Severus," McGonagall said sweetly, "we're going to have to have another little talk about jumping to conclusions."

"Ron's head is going to explode when he hears about that," Hermione giggled as she walked off.

"Yeah," Harry agreed, "McGonagall finally puts Snape in his place and he misses it."

AN: Never did care for the way I ended this before and I always did think it had potential to be a fun fic to write.

Omake: Original Ending

Only moments before they disappeared, a dark shape detached itself from the shadows and took hold of the object.

"Who are you?" Dumbledore demanded after they arrived back in his office.

"I am Keiko," the dark shape replied. "Harry-sama's kunoichi."

"Ichiro's gift?"

"Yes."

"Harry," Dumbledore said with a twinkle in his eye. "Uncork that bottle."

Harry followed the Headmaster's instructions and nearly dropped the bottle nearly dropped it when pink smoke came out of it. And his jaw dropped when the smoke coalesced into an attractive young girl.

"What do you wish of me master?"

AN: Lot's of Harry gets a slave type stories, thought I'd have a bit of fun with the concept. Not sure if I'll write more of it, not too happy with the way I ended it.

Omake on how this would go . . .

"You have to tell her that this wasn't my fault," Harry demanded. "It wasn't even my idea."

"I'm sure Ms. Granger will understand," Dumbledore said with twinkling eyes.

"You don't know what she's like," Harry hissed. "You didn't have to go to any SPEW meetings."

"I understand that Ms. Granger is going to be a bit . . . put out when she finds out what happened. But . . ."

Mini Omake by meteoricshipyards

"Ivan, may I introduce you to Governor Chan Li of the province of Eastern Mongolia. Li, this is Ivan Dragamilov of the People's Committee on Magical Hazards. He was telling me about how they handled their werewolf problem, and as you were talking about the same thing, I thought he might be able to give you some suggestions..."

Couple omake for Luna Malfoy Lovegood:

OMAKE by meteoricshipyards - the expensive country home

"Good night Lord Black. Lovely party. Mrs. Black. Miss Granger."

The last of the guests walked to the very secure apparition location, and disappeared. It was the only place on the grounds that anyone



could apparate to or from.

"That was. . . boring," Harry summed it up.

"Yes, but absolutely necessary," Luna commented.

"I can't believe the amount of magic we used putting this together.

When you said "country manor" I thought of something staid and stately. Not this. . . " she waved her hand at the rooms visible from the front door, "this magical funhouse." A table walked up to them with cups of tea.

"When witches and especially wizards get together, they can't help but

show off. Something in their make up," Luna explained.

Hermione had heard it all before, and had eventually stopped complaining and joined in created the animated decorations, singing plants, dancing silverware, the plates that hummed in six part harmony

throughout the dinner, provided by the army of house elves. The ever

changing colored drinks, the dancing peguins. . . .

"Boss? We's finished cleaning the kitchen," a house elf said to Hermione. Since she found that she couldn't free the elves, (not even Dobby was really free. He had found some way to attach himself to Harry. Truly free elves died, as she knew from poor Winky.) she had

come up with a way to help them -- House Elf Employment Agency: Rent a

House Elf at really good terms. She made sure her elves were well treated, and they had access to the money the company made. Some were

developing interests in the arts, and could afford their materials from the "hobby fund". But she wasn't going to have anyone call her "Mistress" (except Harry and Luna). So "Boss" it was.

"That's fine, Tootie. Get the furniture back to Grimmauld Place and Potter Manor."

"Yes, Boss!" Soon furniture was disappearing from all over the place.

"I'll be sorry to see this place go," Harry said, whistfully.

"Why? Most of it's cardboard?" Hermione asked.

"Because it was his, in a way that no other place he's ever stayed in has been his."

"And I conjured most of it. Well, shall we retire to the bunker?"

"I'd be delighted," Luna said, with a fake upper-class accent. She took one of Harry's arms, while Hermione took the other. They crossed

the grounds to the hidden, cement building built into the side of a hill.

During the night, Harry had been very energetic describing how impregnable his new country manor was. With anti-portkey and

anti-apparition wards over the entire estate except for the one small area near the front door, which could be closed down at a command. There was a anti-intruder line drawn along the entire property line making sure no one could cross. There was no floo access yet, and Harry wasn't sure if he would even hook it up.

Yes, it was very protected against invaders.

An elf popped into the bunker.

"All furniture is out of the manor, Boss. And there are many brooms heading to the manor."

Harry clicked his finger. "I knew I forgot something when protecting the house."

"It's a good think the Potter Manor has that protection," Luna giggled as they watched the swarm of Death Eaters land and rush the house.

"I think they're all inside, Harry," Hermione said, looking through the night-vision enchanted Omnoculars.

"Anyone want to do the honors?" Harry asked.

"Go ahead, Harry. You know you want to."

"If you insist," he said with a smile. Pressing the big red button, they watched the faux-country house explode in a hugely satisfying fireball.

"Shall we go home and get some sleep?"

Luna smiled that smile. "Yes and no."

Omake: Patron of the Arts

By stealacandy

"Okay," said Harry. "Pack'em up, then put up these paintings instead. Really, with the longevity of wizards, you'd think the magical artists would take up the time to actually learn to paint!"

xxx xxx xxx xxx xxx xxx xxx xxx

"Headmaster. Headmaster! HEADMASTER!" yelled the portrait on Dumbledore's wall, interrupting his sleep.

"Mmrp... lemon sherbert... what?" said Hogwarts's old headmaster, Albus Dumbledore as he rose from his bed.

"Albus, Potter had me removed from my wall in No. 12 Grimauld place!" said Phines Nigellus urgently.

"Me too!" harkened Cruella De-Vil.

"And me!" cried Alphonso Centauri.

"And I was just taken off the wall in Potter Manor!" added a dejected Constantin.

"Huh!" said Alfred from his perch on the Headmaster's wall. "I'm still hanging! Yeah! Yeah! Yeah! Take that, Constan! Wait... Oh dear, get off! get off me! Away, I said! Begone!... damn, Dumbledore, the damnable elves just tore me off my perch as well."

"What the bloody hell is going on?" asked a still-sleepy headmaster.

"Language, Albus," admonished Dilly. "You are not so old I can't string you over my lap and spank your bottom!"

"You can't spank the Headmaster, you don't have a lap, Dilly," said Phines Nigellus. "You are a portrait!"

"But I can still make YOUR bottom red, Phines!" she yelled, and the chase began.

Dumbledore's head began throbbing. He swallowed a lemon drop.

xxx xxx xxx xxx xxx xxx xxx xxx

Omake 2: Sporting

"I didn't know you were into racing, Harry. Where did you get such fine horses?"

"I transfigured them," explained Harry.

"Wow! that's great transfiguration work!" said Hermione, admiringly. "What did you transfigure them from?"

"People." said Harry, shortly.

"PEOPLE? HARRY JAMES POTTER! WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?" yelled the shrewish miss Granger.

"They're just Death Eater, Hermione, relax!" Harry fended her off. "Well, mostly, anyway," he finished.

"What do you mean, Harry?" she asked.

"Well, this one over here-" Harry pointed at a horse trotting around the yard. "-is Vicent Crabb. The brown one over there-" Harry gestured towards the stable's door, "-used to be Blaise Zabini."

"And the alnino one the elves are grooming?" asked HErmione. "Tell me it isn't Draco Malfoy!"

"Oh, no," said Harry, and Hermione sighed in relief – a little. "Draco is no longer a Malfoy, Hermione." HArRY explained.

"WHAT?" she screamed. "That's not what I meant, Harry, and you know it! It is Draco, isn't it? By whatever last name he goes these days."

"Well, Ron tried to call him Ferry," said Harry, "because of the episode with the Amazing Bouncing Ferret - but it didn't stick."

"It is Draco!" cried Hermione. "Oh, Harry, how could you?"

"Relax, Hermione," said Harry. "It's not Draco."

Hermione sighed in relief again.

"...it is Colin Creevey." finished Harry.

"WHAT?"

"He pissed me off, you see. Anyway, I'm not only into horse racing," Harry continued, "I'm into hound, and even roosters. Look over there." Harry turned her towards the yard, where she watched what looked like a white pecking hen. "I wanted a rooster, I really did, but Ferry over there is such a chicken."

"Ferry?" said Hermione. "HARRY!!"

xxx xxx xxx xxx xxx xxx xxx xxx

Okay, that's what I've got. Not much, I know, still, Draco is a chicken, isn't he?

I thought to add Romilda Vain somewhere to this Omake, but then I realized she got lost in time, got pregnant, and gave birth to a little girl. Whom she named Sophia Loren, but that's another matter altogether.

Disclaimer: Alcohol, the cause and solution to all of life's problems. So we put a shard of glass up the cabin boy's ass and circumcised the captain

## Sailing and Salvage

"Psst," Ron whispered, "Harry . . . over here."

"What is it?" Harry whispered back.

"Follow me," Ron replied. After a couple nervous glances around, he led his friend to an unused section of the school. "Fred and George showed me this place," Ron explained, "they reckon it used to be a staff lounge." The room was full of worn but good quality leather furniture.

"What's going on?" Harry asked as he plopped down on one of the chairs.

"They also reckon and I agree, that you're under a lot of stress." Ron continued. "I brought you here for a bit of well needed stress relief."

"Uh . . . look, uh . . . I'm flattered that you see me that way but . . ."

"Not that," Ron said quickly, "this." He pulled a bottle out from behind the large couch. "Who loves you baby?"

"Admiral Farragut's fair rum for your gut," Harry read the label. "You sure this is a good idea?"

"Nope," Ron replied cheerfully, "drink up. Forget Snape, forget bloody Voldemort, and forget bloody Umbitch."

"Well . . ." Harry stared at the bottle for a few seconds. "Bottoms up."

"That's the spirit mate," Ron cheered. Ron took the bottle back and took a swig. "Plenty for both of us eh?"

"Yeah mate," Harry agreed, "cheers."

Harry woke up face down in a puddle of his own vomit and his groan of pain woke Ron, who was sleeping in a puddle of his own.

"God," Harry groaned, "I'm never drinking again."

"I'm with you mate," Ron agreed, "do you remember what we did last night?"

"No, you?"

"I just have this feeling that we did something horrible," Ron replied, "something we'll regret for the rest of our lives."

|||||||

"What's all this?" Voldemort hissed.

"It appears to be human feces master," Lucius said helpfully.

"Lucius . . ."

"Yes master?"

"CRUCIO." Voldemort held the spell for a few moments. "How did this get here?"

"I don't know master," Lucius cried, "I was at the Department of Mysteries waiting for Potter to arrive with the others all night."

"Find out who did this," Voldemort ordered, "and bring them to me. The Prophecy can wait, no one defecates on Lord Voldemort's throne." He looked around. "Or vomits on his carpet, or urinates on his drapes, or . . . Lucius, make a list of everything that got befouled when you clean up this place."

"Yes master," Lucius sighed.

|||||||

"Harry, Ron." Hermione squealed, causing them to contemplate murder. "I . . . I don't know what to say, you guys are such good friends."

"We are?"



"How did you know we only needed two more people to sign up for our advanced astronomy summer classes?" Hermione used a quick spell to clean up the vomit and then pulled them both into a massive hug. "I really wanted to go but I knew that the chances of getting to take this class were slim to none . . . I . . . I really love you guys." She released them from her hug. "It really means a lot to me that you two are willing to take classes all summer just so I can take this class, it really does. I'm gonna go tell the others," she announced as she skipped out of the room.

"Classes all summer," Ron groaned. "I knew we did something horrible when we were drunk."

"We can't back out of it," Harry tried to console his friend. Classes all summer means no time with the bloody Dursley family, he thought, hooray for me. "You heard Hermione."

"Yeah," Ron agreed, "just goes to show the dangers of demon rum. I'm never drinking again," he reaffirmed.

|||||

Dumbledore sat in his office with a confused look on his face. Nothing had gone according to plan, Harry was supposed to have faced Voldemort the night before. Several Death Eaters were supposed to have been captured by a group of children, not a surprisingly efficient Quick Reaction Force. He automatically signed and filed several of the papers in his in box without bothering to look at them. It wasn't like anything important ever crossed his desk.

"Perhaps Harry did the sensible thing and reported the crime to the Aurors?" He said doubtfully. "That really doesn't sound at all like something that Harry would do." How the hell did Amelia Bones manage to get her Aurors scrambled so fast?

|||||

"Report," Amelia barked.

"Still no progress on the Naked Vandals," the Auror said nervously, "we do know that at least one one of them got a tattoo on his buttocks."

|||||

"Feels like I've got a sunburn on my ass," Ron complained as they walked into the Transfiguration classroom. "Wonder where Hermione is?"

"Not like her to skip class."

|||||

"Why don't we set that aside for the moment?" Amelia suggested. "We learn how those Death Eaters managed to get into the DOM?"

"Not yet Madame Bones," the Auror said nervously. "But it's a good thing we were mobilized to look for the Naked Vandals or we'd have never noticed the security breach."

"Find out who was supposed to catch these things and tell them that I want to have a very long talk with them," Amelia said with a cruel smile, "using words like incompetence and crucifixion."

"Yes Madame Bones," the flunky agreed with a nervous gulp.

|||||

"Sorry to disturb your class Minerva," Sinistra said as she walked in, "but I need to borrow Messieurs Potter and Weasley."

"Of course," McGonagall agreed. She turned to the two students. "I'm glad you two enjoy my class so much but when you are excused to go to a meeting, I expect you to go to the meeting." She was so happy that Albus was beginning to show a bit of sense in his dealings with Mr. Potter. Why, just a year before Albus wouldn't have allowed Harry to go to summer classes and this year he hadn't so much as made a peep of protest.

The two boys followed their curvy Astronomy Professor to the tower and sat in the empty chairs next to Hermione.

"Well," Aurora said, "now that everyone is here we need to plan our trip to the the port to buy supplies. Now, you'll all want to have at least . . ."

"Um," Ron interrupted with a blush, "I'm not sure that I can afford . . ."

"Don't worry about it," she waved off his concerns, "it's all coming out of my department's budget."

"How can you afford that?" Hermione asked.

"You think Hogwarts pays for the Astronomy program?" Sinistra asked with an amused smile. "Not a chance, it's payed for by a fund set up by private interests. Why else do you think I have equipment that's less then fifty years old?"

"What private interests?"

"Salvage companies mostly," Aurora replied, "and also the few Maritime cargo concerns that still serve the magical world. Now if I may continue?"

"Sorry," Hermione said with a blush.

"Quite alright, never be afraid to ask me a question. In fact, if you have a question then I want you to ask it. Lives could be at stake, never forget that the sea is a dangerous place. Am I understood?"

The students indicated their agreement and Sinistra waved to a trunk that had been sitting unnoticed in one of the corners.

"This is my sea chest," Aurora said proudly, her hand dropping to caress the smooth wood. "And it'll give you an idea of the sort of equipment you'll need to pick out. The one thing I insist that everyone have is a good sextant. That's the one thing you never ever share. A good accurate watch would be something I strongly recommend also." She opened the trunk.

“Why is it wider on the bottom?”

“Stability, any other questions?”

“Why do you have a sword?” Hermione asked curiously.

“Cutlass,” Aurora corrected automatically. “Some waters aren't as safe as others, I never had to use it but it doesn't hurt to be prepared. Much more useful is a good folding knife with a marlin spike,” she said as she pulled out the item, “sheepsfoot blade is the best in my opinion. Some people will say there's no point because the first thing a sailor will do when you give him a knife is stick it into someone. I say that the point gets in the way when the sea is anything but calm and it's a danger around rope and sail besides. Questions?”

“What's the marlin spike for?”

“Splicing line, I'll be sure to teach you a few tricks with knots later. Questions?” She looked around. “Alright then, each of you is going to be one of the ships officers.”

“And you'll be the captain?”

“I'll be the ship's master,” Sinistra corrected, “someone else gets the headache of commanding you lot.”

“Harry'll be the Captain then,” Hermione said firmly, “agreed?”

“I don't wanna be Captain,” Harry said quickly.

“Agreed,” everyone chorused.

“You'll also be the chief diver,” Sinistra said, ignoring the boy's protests. “And since I'll be dealing with most of the bad parts, the Captain should be a fairly easy position. Worry more about being a diver.”

“Oh . . . alright then,” Harry said cautiously.

“Hermione and Luna are the only two students that have high enough grades to be the ship's navigator,” Sinistra continued, “coincidentally

they're also the only two that asked Madame Pomfrey for extra lessons so one of them will have to be the navigator while the other is the Surgeon and naturalist."

"I'm not so sure we should assign Luna the job of Ship's surgeon and naturalist," Hermione said confidently.

"It's either that or Navigator," the Professor said calmly, "and you can be the surgeon."

"Uh . . ." Hermione was in a quandary.

"Pomfrey wouldn't have recommended either of you if you didn't know your stuff."

"I'll be the Navigator," Hermione said in defeat.

"And I'll be the Surgeon," Luna said cheerfully. "May I also be the first mate?" Luna asked as she gave Harry a lazy grin. "Hermione can be second . . . or she can come with, I don't mind sharing."

"Moving right along," Sinistra ignored Luna's attempts to bait Hermione. "We need an Engineer, a Purser, and Gunnery officer for each side of the ship."

"We'll take care of the Gunnery," Padma said after a glance at her sister. "And we could also be the purser, our father owns and runs his own shop."

"Great, all we need now is an Engineer," she said with a grin. "Anyone?" Sinistra asked. "Ok, for the engineer we need someone that's good at making coffee and taking care of animals."

"Animals?"

"Salamanders are used in place of fire," Sinistra explained, "much easier for everyone that way."

"Oh . . . why making coffee?"

"Tradition states that the black gang has the best coffee."

"The Black Gang... I've heard of them. Aren't they the people that ride in the bilge and get the worst jobs possible?" Hermione asked.

"Yes and have no fear we already have three volunteers for the position."

Sinistra opened up a wardrobe exposing three Slytherin students, that Harry spent far too much time around in his opinion, bound and gagged.

"Is that legal?" Hermione asked, eyes wide.

"Legal only counts until you are five miles off the coast, dear. After that it's The Code of The Sea and The Code of The Sea states that anyone that tries to place monitoring charms in my shower has volunteered for the Black Gang."

Luna grinned. "The Code of The Sea is written by the ship's Master for each ship, isn't it?"

"You catch on quick. You might also note that the First Mate's duties are written by the First Mate. It's these little things that make life at sea so much fun."

Harry felt a shiver run down his spine, but as it felt quite a bit better than the usual shiver he got he shrugged it off. He would not regret that decision later.

Sinistra turned back to their 'volunteers' with a sinister look on her face. "Hope you boys are ready for bad food, low pay, rum, buggery, and the lash."

Two of the three shared a look and Goyle cleared his throat and raised his hand with an inquisitive look on his face.

"Yes?"

"What's the catch?"

"Uh . . . no catch."

"And we get paid for this?"

"Very little but . . ."

"No going back on it now," Crabbe interjected, "we've got an agreement."

"Fine," Sinistra agreed, ignoring Draco's outraged expression. No doubt he'd be whining about his father if he hadn't been gagged. "Takes all the fun of Shanghaing someone if they like it though. You boys stay here and make sure Draco doesn't escape," Sinistra sighed, "you Weasley."

"Yes?"

"Congratulations, you're the Engineer. Do a good job and all will be well, do a bad one and you might kill your best friend. Now come along children. We need to buy a ship and get provisioned."

"Wait," a very pale Ron said, "what do you mean kill Harry?"

"He's the chief diver, the engines run the air compressor and the winch. You don't maintain the engine properly and he gets stuck on the bottom with no air." Not really, she figured Harry had more than enough magical power to get himself out of any trouble they were likely to run into on such a short cruise but she figured knowing the worst case scenario would motivate the boy in ways a bad grade could not. "Never forget that the sea is a very dangerous place . . . which is why I love these releases you signed when you were enrolled."

"Releases?"

"How else do you think we stay in business with everything that goes on around here?" Sinistra laughed. "For most of you, this will be the most dangerous thing you've ever done . . . for Mr. Potter it should be nothing special since unlike some of your past Professors, I'm not going to actively work towards your death." She tossed a handful of floo powder into the fire. "Cammell Laird."

The students followed their Professor thorough the fire and emerged to the smell of pitch and pine.

“What can I do for yeh?”

“Here to buy a ship,” Sinistra said calmly, “small salvage vessel with steam and sail.”

“Got just the thing for you,” the man said with a grin.

“Oh?”

“Newly built two masted steam screw brigantine,” he said with a grin, “one of the salvage companies had it built then made a big find.”

“And decided that since they had the money, why not go big.”

“Bingo,” he agreed.

“What's the displacement?”

“One hundred and twenty nine tons,” he replied, “eleven foot draft with a ninety foot deck.”

“Let's see it.”

“Right this way,” he agreed. He led them down the pier and up the gang plank. “What do you think?”

“I think it's good to be back on a ship,” Sinistra said with a grin, “like coming home.”

“Why'd you decide to become a Professor at Hogwarts if you like the sea so much?” Hermione asked curiously.

“I used to work as a navigator on a salvage vessel,” Aurora said absently as she inspected the ship. “Got my master's papers but I couldn't find a master's berth.”

“Because you're a woman?”



"Because I don't have enough bloody experience," she corrected, "shouldn't be a problem after I quit Hogwarts. Do a good job as the Astronomy Professor at Hogwarts for a few years and you can write your own ticket."

"Oh."

"How hard is it find crew these days?" She directed her question to the shipwright.

"Ship comes with a full house elf crew," the man said proudly. "Mostly inexperienced but they seem to be good elves all the same. Bosun's an elf named salty, just got the job but e'knows is stuff."

"What?" Hermione squawked.

"Problem?" Sinistra asked.

"I won't learn on a slave ship," Hermione said firmly, "it's wrong."

"What do you mean slave ship?" Aurora growled.

"The House Elves," Hermione snapped, "I won't come along unless they get paid . . . neither will Harry and Ron."

"What? Of course the crew gets paid," Aurora said with a frown, "how else would they pay for their whores."

"I thought the crew was made of of House Elves?" Hermione asked in confusion.

"And?"

"And they pay for whores?" She asked reluctantly.

"Every decent sized port has a house elf brothel," Sinistra lectured, "I'll take you to one some time if you ask nicely."

"Urk."

Ron just watched with sparkling eyes, he'd never seen Hermione put in her place so quickly or effectively.

"Price?" Sinistra asked.

"Here." The shipwright handed her a slip of paper.

"Done," she said after a quick glance, "pleasure doing business with you."

"Likewise."

"What now Professor?"

"Now we go to pick up your slops," Sinistra replied, "and then to Cooke, Troughton & Simms to get your instruments."

"What kind of instruments?"

"A good sextant, a pocket telescope, that sort of thing."

"Oh."

"And a few other things for Misses Lovegood and Granger," Sinistra added, "since they're the Surgeon and Navigator."

IIIIIIIIII

"We found Madame Umbridge sir," Amelia said with a grave look on her face.

"What happened?" Fudge demanded.

"Looks like she had a run in with the Naked Vandals," Amelia said. "We haven't been able to get any information from her due to her condition but . . ."

"What condition?"

"I'm afraid she's catatonic sir," Amelia said.

"I want you to find the Naked Vandals and bring them to justice," Fudge screamed, "find them and find them now."

"Will do Minister," Amelia agreed.

"Do whatever you must, just find them."

"Happy to oblige Minister."

IIIIIIII

They walked into the shop and the shopkeeper began watching Harry with a frown on his face.

"Hey," the man behind the counter said, "aren't you one of those two kids who ran through the Alley naked the other day?"

"I'm sure you must have me confused with someone else," Harry said firmly.

"No it was you and your buddy fire crotch," the man continued cheerfully, "tell you what. Since you gave me such a good laugh, why don't I give you everything for thirty percent off?"

"Their equipment is being taken care of by the Hogwarts Astronomy Department," Aurora entered the conversation. It was none of her business what her crew did while on land. Well, not beyond doing whatever it took to make sure they got out of jail in time to set sail anyway.

"I'll give you thirty then," the man said, "and I got something special for them."

"What's that?"

"Got a new type of steal they're making things out of," he enthused, "absolutely won't rust. Something to do with using nitrogen."

"Interesting, how much to outfit my whole crew?"

"Only have a dozen knives," he said regretfully.

"I'll take them."

"They also sent two cutlasses," he continued, "and I'd be honored to know that the infamous Naked Vandals were the first men to own them."

“Deal.”

“Uh . . . Professor?”

“What is it Ms. Granger?”

“I read an article on metallurgy and they talked about that alloy.”

“They have anything bad to say about it?”

“No, it's just . . .”

“Yes?”

“It was a muggle magazine I read the article in.”

“And?”

“And what's it doing in a magic shop?”

“Use whatever works if your life is on the line,” Aurora said sternly, “so called 'purity' has no place in a dangerous environment. I thought you'd understand that.”

“I do Professor,” Hermione said quickly, “I just didn't think . . .”

“I understand.”

They spent the rest of the day supplying the crew and when they returned to Hogwarts, Sinistra took the pursuer aside and dismissed the remainder of the class.

“Have fun,” she advised, “and pack up. We'll store your school supplies here so put anything you can't live without in your sea chest.”

“Yes Professor,” they agreed.

“And be here early tomorrow, we're leaving with the tide . . . if the Captain agrees of course.”

“Uh . . . yeah,” Harry stammered when every eye in the room turned to look at him.

“You guys go ahead,” Hermione said as she bit her lower lip, “I need to ask the Professor something.”

“Books?”

“Yeah,” Hermione agreed.

“Come on Harry,” Ron said, “I got something to show you.”

“What is it?”

“In a minute,” Ron replied. They returned to their dorm and packed with a couple flicks of their wands.

“Well?”

“Check it out mate,” Ron said as he handed Harry another bottle.

“Nelson's Funeral Fluid: 'Finest Rum that comes by the drum.' Are you sure this is a good idea Ron?” Harry asked. “You remember what happened last time.”

“No actually,” Ron said, waving off Harry's concerns. “I don't, so it couldn't be that bad could it?”

“I guess not,” Harry allowed.

“Bottoms up then.”

“Here's to tapping the Admiral,” Harry agreed.

IIIIIIII

“We've got a name for one of the Naked Vandals, the one with a tattoo on his ass.”

“Well?” Amelia asked.

“Meester Reddowndere, obviously a pseudonym.”

"Obviously," Amelia agreed dryly.

"We also have a good description of the tattoo."

"Oh?"

"Skull and crossbones . . ."

"So he's a Death Eater," Amelia mused.

"I don't think that . . ."

"And since Fudge has ordered us to stop them, he's ordered us to stop Death Eaters."

"Oh . . . understood ma'am."

AN: I wanted to give Sinistra an interesting background since she's fairly two dimensional in the books. Thanks go to dogbertcarroll, sorenkanzaki.

Omake by Ed Becerra

"The Dark Thingy did NOT appear in my office, Amelia! It was just - just some pranksters! Some pranksters who thought it would be funny to try and embarrass me! And I want you to arrest them!"

"Arrest who? If it wasn't You-Know-Who, then who was it?"

"I don't care! Just arrest someone! ANYONE! The usual suspects! It doesn't matter! Just do it!"

Addition by SlickRCBD

"Wait! It was Potter! That lying, attention-seeking brat set the whole thing up in a desperate attempt to embarrass me. Have an arrest warrent issued for him immediately. I want him in Azkaban for sedition."

Omake by Ronnie McMains II

1.) The First Mate shall personally ensure the Captain's bed is always warm.

2.) The First Mate shall personally ensure the Captain has been properly

bathed each morning, night, and after each dive.

2a.) It is entirely proper that the First Mate ensure this by bathing the Captain personally.

3.) The First Mate shall personally ensure the Captain does not suffer from high levels of stress, using whatever means are at the First Mate's disposal.

Addition by me:

"You know," Sinistra said after reading the first three rules, "I was just kidding when I said you got to write out your own rules but good initiative."

"Does that mean you approve?" Luna asked shyly.

"Why not," Aurora agreed with a grin. If for no other reason then the potential for entertainment. "But these really don't seem like duties for the first mate."

"They don't?" Luna drooped.

"Nope, they look more like the duties of the ship's surgeon to me. The first three anyway, health, welfare, and all that. "

"Yes, but you didn't say the Ship's Surgeon made her own rules. But that's even better, because even the Captain has to listen to the Surgeon when it comes to medical matters . . ."

Later . . .

"What are you doing in my bed Luna?" Harry asked blearily.

"We're not bunking," Luna replied, "since my cabin got condemned as a health risk I'm staying with you." She decided to leave unsaid the fact that she was the one who'd condemned her cabin, Harry was better off not knowing some things.

"That normally refers to people sleeping in the same bed consecutively, rather than concurrently Luna," Harry said wearily.

"I'm sure it doesn't," Luna said after a moment of thought, "now come to bed."

Omake by davidiusbrown

"Harry, the Captain of any sea vessel is required to have a bed warmer. Didn't you watch 'Roots' when it was on the telly? My Muggle Studies professor said all the muggles watched it."

"But, but Luna..."

"Harry, it's for your own good. Imagine what Hermione would say if she found a house elf in your bed. Or would you prefer...I guess I could order one of the Black Gang to sleep with you?"

Harry said nothing. He started shaking in fear. They were only a day from port and he had already heard stories about the dark wet happenings down in the dark wet bilge.

"See Harry, you need a bed warmer. You're shivering so much, you're likely to come down with consumption. Or scurvy. No matter, as Ship's Surgeon, Starfleet regulations allow me to override your authority for your own good. Now come to bed, Captain. That's an order."

"Starfleet? Luna, that's only on the telly."

"Harry, Harry, Harry. We're on a ship, right?"

"Yes."



"And we're here to study navigating by the stars, right?"

"Yes."

"So this is a starship. Get into bed."

Yes, in the mini-series *Roots*, the sea captain commanding the ship that took Kunte Kinte to Annapolis, Maryland was given an African woman to warm his bed for the trip across the Atlantic.

"What do you mean by 'Do I want a job?'" , Hermione exclaimed.

"Well, it's a job, see. And you could make good galleons. And house elves, well, they have needs, and they seem to like you, Granger."

"Ron!"

"Hermione!"

"I THOUGHT TIPPY WAS SUPPOSED TO BE HERE!" They both yelled as one.

Addition by dogbertcarroll

crack

"Tippy is her Miss... Why is Miss on a ship?"

Hermione breathed a sigh of relief. "Well... It's a class assignment and apparently we forgot to make sure you came along."

"Tippy understands, but Tippy couldn't possibly take up her... duties unless she belonged to a family." The female house elf said apologetically.

"Um..."

"You know, it's not that bad a job. The pay's good and being navigator you have all sort of free time to handle them." Ron interrupted.

"How'd you like to be my house elf?" Hermione shouted.

"I thought you were against enslavement?"

"Shut up, Ron. I'll... just be her employer and consider it a lifelong contract. That's legal."

Tippy smiled and adjusted her pillowcase so that it hung off one shoulder. "Tippy best get to work then!"

Omake by me:

"You boys want to come out of the bunker and get hammocks?" Sinistra asked.

Before Draco had a chance to agree, Crabbe pushed him out of the way. "Oh no," the dull boy said with a frown, "the ships papers say we get to sleep in the coal bunker and have our mess in the bilge. We're not going to let you trick us into giving that up."

"All right then," she said with a smile, "just making sure."

Related omake by Ed Becerra

Goyle looked at Crabbe.

Crabbe looked at Goyle.

"We get rum. With our meals."

"Every day. We don't even have to pay for it."

"Where the hell was she during our First year?"

Omake by Ikari Shinji - the next time they drink-

Hermione: laying naked between the two "You two were so vigorous last night." giggles "I've never been Dutch Double Doored before."

Harry: looks at Ron

Ron: looks at Harry Both: "AAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!"

Hermione: "Don't worry, i made sure your balls never touched so it's

not gay."

Something related provided by davidiusbrown

If Luna's father is the Captain, this applies:

What do you do with a drunken sailor?

What do you do with a drunken sailor?

What do you do with a drunken sailor early in the morning?

Put him in the bed with Captains daughter.

Put him in the bed with Captains daughter.

Put him in the bed with Captains daughter early in the morning.

And the classic:

I joined the Navy

to see the world

And what did I see?

I saw the sea.

I saw the Atlantic

and the Pacific

and the Atlantic

isn't romantic

and the Pacific

isn't what it's cracked up to be.

I joined the Navy

to do or die.

But I didn't do.

And I didn't die.

I just saw the ocean

and the sky.

And what did I see?

I saw the sea.

And by meteoricshipyards

Ron: I joined the navy to see the girls, but what did I see? I saw the sea. Instead of some brunets in a taxi I saw nothing but the Black Sea, And the Black Sea's not what it's cracked up to be!

(Harry comes up with his arms around Hermione and brown haired Sally Anne)

Harry: Speak for yourself.

Disclaimer: Rum, Buggery, and The Lash

Tradition : See Above

"Oh god I'm never gonna drink again," Harry groaned.

"Curse whoever forced that bottle of demon rum on us," Ron agreed.

"What happened last night?"

"I don't remember mate," Ron said thoughtfully, "but I think I got laid."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah," Ron agreed, "bet she was hot too."

|||||

"Minister."

"What is it?" Fudge demanded.

"Madame Umbridge has recovered from her cationic state," the flunky said nervously.

"Oh?" Fudge asked. "What happened?"

"Uh . . ."

"Out with it man," Fudge snapped.

"One of the Naked Vandals did it sir."

"What, how?"

"Turns out, all you need is love."

|||||

"You sure?"

"I wouldn't nail a girl that wasn't mega hot Harry," Ron said arrogantly.

"Damn, we gotta go meet Sinistra and the others."

"Come on mate," Ron offered Harry a hand and frowned when the other boy winced. "You okay?"

"I think so," Harry replied, "but my hand is sore for some reason."

IIIIIIIIII

"More information on the latest attack by the Naked Vandals Madame Bones."

"Let's have it," Amelia sighed.

"The dark haired one shouted, and I quote 'ahm Se'vs Snap bitch.' Right before breaking Auror Dawlish's jaw with a right cross."

"Did Dawlish get a good look at his attacker?"

"No Madame Bones."

"Very well, have Severus Snape brought in for questioning."

"Yes Madame Bones."

IIIIIIIIII

"Hey Luna," Harry said as they walked into the Astronomy tower to join their class, "could you take a look at my hand?"

"Of course I could Harry," Luna agreed. She pulled out her wand and made a few odd movements. "You seem to have cracked one of the small bones. Hold still and I'll have everything working the way it's supposed to."

"Thanks Luna."

"It's my job Harry."

"Everybody here then?" Sinistra asked loudly. "Then we've got just one thing to do before commissioning the ship and sailing out on the tide."

"What's that?"

"Figuring out a name for her," Sinistra said with a smile.

"Since it's a salvage vessel," Padma began, "why don't we call it the Free-Enterprise."

"No," Sinistra said firmly, "can't happen."

"Why not?"

"It can't be any variation of enterprise because let's face it 'fate protects fools, little children and ships called Enterprise' and with the crew on this ship we all know that ain't happening" Several eyes turned to look at Harry.

"How about Fate's Bitch then?" Luna suggested brightly. "Or the Universe's Spittoon?"

"With that kind of attitude we might as well name it Titanic." Harry groaned.

"That's a lovely name." Luna replied.

"Fits." Sinistra nodded.

"I was kidding!" Harry complained while everyone agreed that it was the perfect name and started discussing what color to paint the ship's name on. "We are not naming the ship the Titanic."

"Awww. But it's such a lovely name."

"No."

"How about the . . ."

|||||||

"Damn it," Snape sneered, "where are Potter and his merry band of idiots?" And where's Draco and the others, he thought. He'd have to inform the Headmaster of the latest shenanigans. Before he had a

chance to remove several thousand points from his least favorite students, the door burst open and several burly Aurors walked in.

"You're coming with us," they said as their massive fists pummeled the Potions master for 'resisting arrest.

After the Aurors had left, Neville pulled out his wand and cast a perfect corporeal patronus charm.

"Guess all I needed was a happy enough memory," Neville mused.

Hanna sighed, she had been hoping to provide him with a happy memory to cast the charm, now she would have to figure out another way to approach him.

Susan patted her on the back. "It's ok, we'll figure something out. Us Puffs aren't quitters!"

IIIIIIIIII

"Glad that's taken care of," Sinistra said in relief.

"Who'd have thought we'd all be able to agree on a name," Hermione agreed.

"And it's such a perfect name too," Luna said dreamily.

"Your things have been moved to the ship and stowed," Sinistra said, "everyone grab hold of the portkey and away we go."

IIIIIIIIII

"Alright then Severus," Amelia said cheerfully, "we'd like to give you a truth potion and wring your mind for every shred of information we can find. Due to a recent ruling, I have to inform you that you have a choice of wether to drink the potion . . ."

"Absolutely not," Snape sneered.

"Or take it rectally," Amelia continued. "And since you don't want to drink it."



"I loath you aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaall," Severus managed to scream.

"Are you sure this is legal Madame Bones?"

"The ruling said we have to give them a choice of wether or not they want to drink a truth potion," Amelia replied, "if they don't want to drink it then we have to administer it rectally. Seems clear enough to me."

IIIIIIIIII

They boarded the ship and Sinistra ordered everything made ready, adding that everyone should double check their areas to insure that all was in order. As the ship's master, that meant that she had to triple check everything for herself. Everything seemed to be in order until she heard a loud argument in the ship's galley. She walked in to investigate and found two house elves in the midst of a heated argument.

"What seems to be the problem here?" She asked mildly.

"Dobby is Harry Potter Sir's cook," the little elf growled, "Dobby will not let strange elf cook for Harry Potter sir."

"Sloppy is ship cook," the other house elf growled back.

"Why are you Mr. Potter's cook?"

"Dobby is always Harry Potter sir's cook," Dobby replied, not taking his eyes off the other house elf. "Always is."

"Why don't I just step out for a few minutes to let you two resolve things between yourselves?" Sinistra suggested. She closed the door and studiously ignored the sounds of violence coming from the galley. A few minutes later, the door opened and Dobby flung the other house elf out. "Everything been resolved then?" She asked, ignoring the badly beaten house elf on the deck.

"Dobby is Harry Potter sir's cook, Dobby will also cook for other ship offeysers, sloppy can cook for crew."

"Glad you found a way to compromise," Sinistra said happily. It was so nice to see the crew resolving their differences rather than bothering her or the cadet captain. With that thought, she went on the prowl to see what else she could find.

|||||||

"You know mate," Ron said as they made their inspections, "I know I nailed a mega hot chick last night but what did you do?"

"I'm sure I didn't do anything too big," Harry said after a moment of thought, "nothing anyone will notice."

"Probably," Ron agreed, "how hard could it be to stay out of the spot light for a day."

|||||||

"That's right," the owner of the Chudley Cannons said firmly, "the Naked Vandals are on our team so when one of them knocked out the rest of the team before mounting a broom and beating the Harpies single handedly is a valid tactic."

"I don't know about that," the official said doubtfully.

"Where in the rules does it say that you can't foul your own team mates?" The owner challenged.

"No where but . . ."

"Then what's the problem?"

"Exactly how long have the Naked Vandals been members of your team?"

"Since the black haired one knocked out the rest of his team mates," the owner replied with a smirk, "the red haired one became a member after I was told that there are two of them."

"Well . . . everything seems to be in order."

|||||||

"Winky is taking care of sick people," the house elf insisted.

"Loona is jobbed with taking care of sick people," Luna replied with a smile, "Luna's job. Not Winky."

"Winky's job."

"Luna's job."

"What seems to be the trouble girls?" Sinistra asked with a sigh.

"Winky is jobbed with taking care of sick people," the house elf said firmly, "Dobby is saying so."

"Luna is jobbed with taking care of sick people," Luna said cheerfully, "Sinny is saying so."

"Sinny?" Aurora said dryly. "Winky, you're Luna's loblolly elf. That means you cook for the patients, clean, and assist her."

"Winky gets to cook and clean?" The elf said with sparkeling eyes. "Deal. Winky gets to clean, Luuuna doesn't," she crowed.

"But Luuuuna wants to clean," Luna protested.

"Too bad," Sinistra interjected. "You're the surgeon, she's the loblolly elf."

"Awww."

"Ha, Winky is winning."

"Is not."

"Is so."

"Why don't I just leave you two alone?" Aurora suggested as she took her leave. She walked up to the deck and took one last look around. "Is everything ready to go Mr. Potter?"

"Yes Professor," Harry agreed.

"Helmsman, take us out of the harbor."

|||||||

"Good afternoon Madame Bones, my name is Dirk Chudley and I understand that you have one of my players in custody?"

"Which one?" She asked mildly, mentally reviewing the list of people she had in her holding cells.

"The black haired Naked Vandal."

"Ah," she said in understanding, "I'm afraid that was all a misunderstanding. We apprehended a dangerous Death Eater who claimed to be one of the notorious Naked Vandals."

"I see, thank you Madame Bones. Apologies for any misunderstanding and please contact me if you happen to apprehend one of my players in the future."

"Of course," she agreed, "feel free to drop by any time to inspect the cells. Never know if one of our inmates might happen to be one of your new players."

"I'll do that, thanks." He said with a pleased smile. "In fact, I think I'll do that right now."

"It was just a joke," she said to the closing door, "oh well."

AN: Made a small change to the first part of this. Dogbertcarroll, David, and pudiwen2001 all had a hand in making this.

Omake: The Shape of Things to Come?

"Pull him up on deck," Sinistra ordered. She watched as the students dragged the heavy dive suit containing shivering Harry Potter up onto the deck. "Get his helmet off."

"Thanks," Harry said between gasps of fresh air. "That was a fun one."

"Oh?"

"Yeah," Harry said with a nod, "I understand what you mean about mixed gas now."

"Good," Sinistra said with a grin, "get the suit off him."

"Wait," Harry said frantically, "I'm not wearing anything under this."

"You're going to have to get used to lack of privacy around your ship mates," Sinistra sighed. "Fine, who do you want to help you?"

"Ron and Hermione."

"You heard him," Sinistra barked, "get him to his state room and get him into some dry clothes."

The two students manhandled their friend off the deck and into his tiny room.

"Sit down Harry," Ron suggested. Hermione gasped when she saw the network of scars covering her friend's torso and opened her mouth to say something only to be silenced by a look from Ron.

"Thanks guys," Harry said after the suit had been stripped off and he'd been wrapped in a warm blanket. "I can take it from here."

"Right," Ron agreed, "come on Hermione."

"Oh, and tell Luna that I've got a specimen for her."

"Will do."

"Ron," she gasped after they'd left the room, "those scars."

"Yeah," Ron said, "Harry's real sensitive about them, you don't want to look at them but you can't help yourself sometimes. S'why he wanted us to bring him in here. He's been having me stand watch while he showers so the others don't get a peak for a long time now and since the other blokes are good about pretending they don't know most of the time so it all works out."

"His uncle?" Hermione asked, biting her lower lip in distress.

"Some of em I think," Ron said reluctantly, "others are from his cousin but I think most of them come from his bloody lack of luck."

"Oh . . . why . . . never mind."

"Just pretend you didn't see them," Ron advised, "and don't ask about them. He really hates it when people ask about them."

"Thanks Ron."

"What're friends for Hermione."

On their way out, they passed their Professor who was making her way towards Harry's state room.

"Harry," Sinistra said as she knocked on the door, "are you decent?"

"Come in Professor," Harry replied.

"Now what's all this about not changing on deck?" She demanded.

"It's just," Harry lifted a corner of his shirt to reveal his scars. "I'm not exactly pretty."

"That's it?" Sinistra asked with a laugh. "You think you're the only one who looks like a bloody patch work quilt? Like I've said before," she said as she pulled up a corner of her shirt to reveal a wicked scar. "The sea is a dangerous place. This is from a bar fight in a little nowhere port, I went in to drag out some of our crew and one of their playmates didn't want the game to end so he gave me this." Her finger traced the scar. "I've got 'em all over my body, but as you're a student I'm afraid we'll have to forgo playing show and tell."

"Right," Harry agreed with a blush.

"You may have a lot of them but I think you'll find that most people in this business won't bat an eye."

"Guess the sea is a lot different from the land."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Don't wizards have a taboo about scars?" Harry asked in confusion. "Ron's always looking at mine and the other boys in my dorm always pretend not to see them . . . hell the whole bloody world seems to be obsessed with my forehead sometimes."

"Landsmen," she said in disgust. "Think nothing of them. To a sailor they just means you've lived."

Harry groans. Then pauses for a minute. "Wait, are you saying that these other scars are the ones that are really labeling me the 'Boy-Who-Lived' and not the one on my forehead? That I've actually EARNED that title, instead of it being inherited as a result of my mother's sacrifice?"

"Of course. That little memento on your noggin may have given you the moniker, but it's the others that have truly earned it for you. Stop hiding them at sea and see how experienced sailors respond to you. I expect a fair amount of respect for who you really are, truthfully. Life is pain, anyone who says different is trying to sell you something."

Back on deck, Hermione returned to the group only to find that Luna had already found her gift . . .

"Look what Harry brought me," Luna said. In her hand she held a small silver and black fish with ear like fins on its head. "It's a sling-digget."

"No it's not Luna," Hermione said in a superior tone.

"Then what is it?" Luna challenged.

"It's . . . ohhhh, I don't know. But I can assure you that it is definitely not a sling-digget."

"Is so."

"Is not." Hermione reddened when she realized how childish her response.

"Is so."

"What seems to be the problem girls?" Sinistra asked mildly.

"Hermione is trying to butt in on my job," Luna said with a pout. "She says that this fish is not a sling-digget."

"Ms. Granger, unless you want Ms. Lovegood determining our location . . ."

"That's okay professor," Hermione said quickly.

"So what is it?" Aurora asked after Hermione was gone.

"Equetus acuminatus, commonly called a Hi-Hat."

"Is there a reason you need to bait Ms. Granger like that?"

"She needs to learn to relax," Luna said contritely, "that or get laid and since the only boys on this boat are the black gang who no girl would touch on a bet. Ron who isn't a possibility, and Harry . . ."

"And you want Harry for yourself right."

"I really don't mind sharing," Luna said quickly. "Sometimes you like apples and sometimes you like oranges, I like them both at once."

"Spare me the details of your personal life please."

"Sorry Professor, I'm just saying that I don't mind sharing with . . . friendly girls. I just don't think Hermione will go for it and I know Harry wouldn't unless I got to him first."

"So you've settled on trying to find a way to get Ms. Granger to relax then?"

"Yes Professor."

"You know a good captain doesn't diddle his crew right?"

"Not any of them?" Luna asked in disappointment.

"Well . . . traditionally it was part of the cabin boy's job," Sinistra admitted.



"Then . . ."

"Yes it's too late to become the cabin boy."

"Well . . . Harry isn't the real captain," Luna mused.

"True, it's also bad form to diddle your students so I'm out twice. Have fun Ms. Lovegood."

"Thank you Professor."

"And if you don't mind me making a suggestion?"

"What is it Professor?"

"Start using the real names for the fish if they sound odd enough," Sinistra said with a grin, "or translate the latin names if they don't. Imagine the look on Hermione's face when she realizes that you've been right the whole time."

"Do you think her head will explode?" Luna asked with a giggle. "Thank you for the suggestion Professor."

"Any time Ms. Lovegood. One more thing?"

"Yes Professor?"

"Why did you say that Mr. Weasley wasn't a possibility?"

"I've seen the way he looks at Harry in the Gryffindor showers," Luna replied.

"Oh . . . wait, how did you . . . carry on Ms. Lovegood."

"Yes Professor."

AN: Let's see now, Harry thinks that the wizard world is obsessed with scars. Ron thinks that Harry is really sensitive about them. Hermione is under the impression that they're all from the horribly cliché horribly abusive childhood and she thinks that Luna is serious. Luna thinks that Ron is gay. And everyone is wrong. SlickRCBD and dogbertcarroll provided scenes for the above.

OMAKE: Purser

"Now on the surface, the job of Purser seems to be fairly easy."

"Don't you just have to keep the ship stores?" Parvati asked.

"Hand give the crew their rum ration and arrange cargo and sell the slops and you have to have a bit of larceny in your souls," Sinistra agreed. "Just remember that you may be evil bastards but you're our evil bastards, cheat the hell out of everyone that isn't on this ship."

"Ok," Padma agreed,

"And a little skimming off the top is accepted, even expected . . . just don't do so much that the ship suffers."

Omake: Shore

"I gave strict instructions that only the ship's captain was to come to shore," the customs inspector said coldly.

"He's the Captain," Sinistra said with a nod to Harry. "I'm the ship's master."

"Cadets?"

"On the nose."

"That's different then," he said in a much warmer tone. The man turned to Harry. "Do you have any large quantities of alcohol, narcotics, pornography, or hallucinogenics intended for resale?"

"No," Harry replied, prompted by Sinistra's head shake.

"Would you like some?"

"Harry, why don't you go across the street and have a drink while I finish up here?" Sinistra ordered.

"Yes Professor."

"He's a good kid," Sinistra said with a fond smile, "give him another ten or twenty years and he might be a good captain. Now then, here's a list of what I've got in terms of provisions."

"Don't worry about it," the customs inspector waved it off, "you've got cadets so I've suddenly discovered my ability not to be a bastard."

"Appreciate it," Sinistra said with a grin, "nice of you not to add to my problems."

"Figure you have enough, what with having a ship full of cadets and all."

"Well I . . ." she cut off when she noticed a ruckus coming from the watering hole she'd sent Harry. "Be right back."

"Take your time."

Sinistra burst into the bar to find Harry using a chair to hold off two rough looking characters armed with knives.

"Can't leave you alone for five bloody minutes can I?" She said as she coshed one of the belligerents. "You seem to have a problem with my student?" She said to the other.

"Boy doesn't know his place," the drunk slurred.

"Harry."

"Yes Professor." Harry broke the chair over the man's head.

"Next time use your wand, two quick spells and it would've all been over." She sighed then raised her voice to address the room. "Can I go back to what I was doing or does someone else want to pick a fight with my student?"

"Leave the boy with us Aurora," a voice said from one of the darker corners. "We'll look out for him."

"Bax?"

"The very same," the woman agreed, "would've jumped in earlier if I knew he belonged to you."

"Thanks Bax."

"What're friends for Aurora."

Omake by dogbertcarroll

"I understand there's a problem?"

"I'm sorry professor, but we seem to be lacking a little something that was promised in our contract." Goyle said firmly.

"The coffee?"

"Nah, coffee is fantastic!" Crabbe spoke up, Draco nodding along with him.

"The poor wages?"

"Nah, we're getting paid just enough to hit the housewife brothel, so we're good."

"The buggery?"

"We got that covered." Goyle said proudly, as Draco winced behind him.

"Bad food?"

"Reminds me of my Mum's attempts at cooking when the housewives were sick." Crabbe said with a tear in his eye.

"Then what did we miss?"

"The lash, woman! We were promised a certain amount of lashing and so far we haven't received a single lick!" Draco complained.

"Oh, well... as a teacher I'm not sure I'm allowed to engage in certain activities like that with students."

"But Snape..." Whatever Goyle was about to say was muffled by his friends hands covering his mouth.

Padma popped up behind the ship's master. "Did you say lash? As in Mistress Padma please give me another stroke?" She smiled with a sadistic gleam in her eye.

Sinistra carefully backed away from the four. "I think you've all got this covered so I have to do something else... elsewhere."

Mini omake by dogbertcarroll:

I was going to toss in something about Luna teaching him pearl diving and magical bearded clams...

Two sailors from a nearby ship:

"Most amazing pearl diver I ever saw."

"He's got the magic touch alright. Only..."

"What?"

"Most divers have to use crowbars to open up those giant clams and he's the only diver I've ever saw that doesn't use his hands at all."

Omake by thecaitiffwriter

"We'll call her The Floating Deathtrap!" Professor Sinistra said proudly once everyone had arrived on the pier.

"Are you sure that's appropriate?" Hermione had a natural reluctance to question her teacher's judgment but every once in a while she just had to speak up.

"We only lost three last year," Aurora confided, "but I'm sure we can do better this summer. We even brought our own trouble magnet so there's no point diving for the cursed gold that we had to leave on

last year's ship. Unless things get too boring anyway..."

"Come on Hermione," Ron started towards the gang plank with a cocksure smile. "What's the worst that could happen?"

A horrified look crossed the poor girl's face and she could feel the doom settling in around them, "Are you trying to get us all killed? You're deliberately taunting Murphy!"

Harry grinned and followed his oldest friend onto the ship, "Hermione, if there's anything Hogwarts has taught me it's that Murphy was an optimist."

Omake by sorenkzaki

"Hermione, it's a long established naval tradition that the Captain should have the best food."

"But Luna, house elf slavery is wrong! Making them work harder to prepare a special meal ..."

"It says so in 'Spithead: A History'!"

"What? It does not!"

"Have you read 'Spithead: A History'?"

"Of course I have!"

"Well, it's right there, just before the chapter on 'One thousand and one knots and hitches for lonely sailors' but after 'How to properly enjoy a giving (and receiving) a traditional English bugging'."

"..."

"Were you too distracted by the illustrations?"

Omake by moshehim

Aboard the U.S.S. Nashville a chief petty officer looked up from the monitor he was watching, lifting his hand to his headpiece. "What the fuck?" he thought. They have been tracking a sailboat for a while now, but this... "Sir," he called his commander, "you better take a look at this!"

The lieutenant picked up a pair of earphones and listened in on what the chief caught. 'What the fuck?' he, too, thought.

Standing orders were not to report biological objects, unless directly ordered otherwise. However... "Con, sonar, Cap'n, you better come and listen to this.

Aboard the "Whatitsname" Hermione gritted her teeth in frustration. "Luna!" she cried. "Stop enchanting the ship! And release those whales right now!"

"That's not a whale, it's a humpback-" Luna started to say, only to be cut off by Hermione.

"No it's not!"

"Yes it is - see? It's humping the back of the ship!"

"Yes, I can see that all too well, now stop it this instant!"

"Oh, poo!"

Omake by moshehim

"Draco, what are you doing?"

"What's it to you, Mudblo-?" Draco's drivel was cut off by a sound lashing from mistress Padma.

"It looked like you were- you were-"

"This is my nany goat!" said Draco proudly.

"Oh Lord." said Hermione, and walked away.

Optional: "I'll be buggering her later, too!"

Omake by: Thats for me to know and you not to...at least for now

"I really like the ship name we decided on." Luna happily

stated. "It's a shame that the HMS Shag at Sea was taken. I may have

to contact this...Nigel Powers to see if I can visit sometime and get more ideas."

"Nigel Powers, I wonder if he's related to the Austin Powers my mother

talks highly of." said Hermione. She filed that away to ask her mother in her next letter.

The Wombat

It was on the Good Ship Venus,

by Merlin you shoulda seen us,

the figurehead was a whore in bed

and the masthead was a penis...

(Frigging in the Rigging - great)

And it reatins some (!?) astronomical relevance and dignity, honest...



Disclaimer: The truth has a habit of being distorted.

## Rumors and Oddities

Harry was miserable, it seemed that everything that could go wrong in his life was happening. He'd been entered into a contest that didn't so much have winners as survivors, his best friend Ron along with half the school wasn't speaking to him, the Press was airing a distorted version of his personal life for all to laugh at, and to top it all off a couple of Hufflepuff girls had been giving him odd looks all bloody day.

"What's wrong Harry," Hermione asked sympathetically, "the Prophet again?"

"Let's go to the library," Harry said. He rose from his seat and grabbed his friend by the hand. "Now."

"Okay," Hermione agreed with a shocked look on her face as Harry dragged her out of the Great Hall. "Harry," she said after he'd slowed down, "I'm always happy to go to the library but why are you taking me there now?"

"I just can't stand their looks anymore," Harry replied out of the corner of his mouth.

"Don't let them get you down," Hermione advised, "they don't know the real you. The Harry that would never enter this bloody contest. I know the real you and I trust you to have told me . . . I trust you to have asked my help if you were planning to do it," she ended with a giggle.

"Not them," Harry replied, his eyes darted around the hall.

"Then . . . who?"

"Hanna Abbot and Susan Bones," Harry replied, "they keep looking at me."

"What kind of look?" Hermione asked with a grin. "You are a good catch you know . . . maybe one of them fancy's you." She added nervously.

"I . . . I don't . . . I'm . . . maybe." Harry slowed down as he considered Hermione's idea. 'A good catch? I have most of the magical world against me, the friggin' looneys, how could I be considered a good catch?'

"But you don't think so?"

"No, I don't," he said sourly. 'Probably some plot. I probably have a mole on my bum that means I'm destined to find and be bitten by some horrible creature while fining Helga Hufflepuff's garter belt.'

IIIIIIIIII

"He noticed us," Susan said calmly.

"Uh huh," Hanna agreed, "did you see the look on his face?"

"Yeah," Susan laughed, "I wonder what he's thinking?"

"Who knows how a boy's mind works," Susan said with a shrug.

"Yeah . . . you sure about this?"

"I wrote to Aunt Amelia and she said that he's got the power and that Granger has the grades. I thought she was joking till I did a little research and found out it'd been done before."

"We could always go into the muggle world?"

"We could," Susan said reluctantly.

"Piss on the muggle world," Hanna agreed, "what's good for them is good for them. I can't live without magic."

"What about one of the other countries?"

"What about 'em?" Hanna snorted, thinking of how bizarre some of them where, even in comparison to England.

"Yeah. As much as they're pushing Harry, he's gonna do it anyway."

"And with Weasley gone, there's an open spot . . . maybe two if we tell them we're together. Now's the time to get in on the ground floor."

"Shall we go find Harry?"

"I think we shall."

IIIIIIIIII

"You calmed down yet?" Hermione asked. "Or do you want to hide here in the library for a little while longer? Those girls might be up to something and we can't be too careful, you know how Hufflepuffs are. One second you're fine and the next minute 'BAMN' you're pinned beneath a massive amount of Puffs following their Dark Lord, Pajama The Terror!"

"You're not helping," Harry replied, a smile tugged at the corner of his mouth.

"One of them probably just likes you," Hermione continued, "what's more likely? That a girl likes you or that it's some sinister plot to destroy the school?"

"Well . . there was Ginny, so it could easily be both at once." Harry said reluctantly.

"See? You're due for a patch of good luck," Hermione said firmly, "now do you want to go do something or would you like to study here?"

"Before you do that." Susan cleared her throat. "Hanna and I would like to have a chat with the two of you."

"Perhaps we could take this to one of the study rooms?" Hanna suggested.

"You had to tempt Murphy didn't you?" Harry shot Hermione a dirty look.

"I'm sure they aren't planning to destroy the school," Hermione said weakly, "right?"

"Why don't we cover that later?" Susan asked with a grin.

"Sorry Harry," Hermione said as the group moved to somewhere more private.

"What's this about then?" Harry asked after the door closed.

"We couldn't help but notice that there's an opening in your little trio and Susan and I were hoping to fill it," Hanna began. "We'd like to fill it . . . if you want another boy then I'm willing to transform and . . ."

"What are you talking about?" Hermione demanded.

"So you weren't in a three way relationship with Harry and Ron then?" Susan asked in surprise.

"NO," Hermione screamed.

"Huh . . . well, this is awkward."

"What did you mean when you said you were willing to transform?" Harry asked, it was like a train wreck in that he couldn't turn away.

"Hmm?" Hanna snapped back to reality. "Just that if you liked boys or if Hermione liked two at once that I was willing to become a boy, why?"

"You can do that?"

"Easily," Hanna said with a nod, "why?" Any number of charms and potions could be used to make the change.

"Don't . . . just don't tell me any details," Harry said sickly.

"Okay," she agreed with a look of confusion on her face.

"You thought that?" Hermione asked with a look of horror on her face.

"Most of the school did . . . well, does." Hanna said with a shrug. "You have to admit that the three of you didn't spend too much time away from each other."

"That doesn't mean that . . ." Hermione trailed off.

"We know that," Susan agreed, "now."

"Was there anything else then?" Harry asked.

"Yeah," Hanna said, "we were hoping to come with you when you made your own country . . . assuming you were willing to agree to the idea that what a girl does in her own home and with whom is her own business so long as it doesn't hurt anyone." She squeezed Susan's hand gently.

"My own country?"

"All it takes is power and my Aunt Amelia thinks you have enough," Susan prompted, "didn't you know all of this?"

"No," Harry replied, "Hermione?"

"I have no idea what they're talking about Harry," Hermione muttered.

"Ok," Susan began, "you've noticed how . . . screwy the laws are in the magical world right?"

"And how the press gets away with bloody murder," Hanna added, "no libel laws like the muggles have."

"And?"

"If you don't like it, leave and make your own country."

"That's what they always say when someone complains," Susan explained, "you get enough people and it's not hard to raise a bit of seabed and make your own island. It's how Atlantis got started, they collapsed the capstone and sank it when the minister went mad and thought the world was plotting against him."

"Make it unplotable and bob's your uncle," Hanna continued, "Susan's Aunt Amelia figured that you had enough power to do it and we figured that Granger had researched all the charms to do it."

"Joining the tournament under a fourth school fit too," Susan continued, "as a student of a fourth school the Hogwarts charter no longer applies to you. You can do any magic you want, wherever you want, and whenever you want. We just sort of figured . . ."

At that moment Vernon shit his pants thinking that someone had stepped on his grave and Harry got a look that made Snape's hair turn white...

"Add in the relationship we thought you two had with Weasley," Susan sighed, "made sense that you wanted to find a place that wouldn't judge you . . . like we do."

"Like you judge me or like you want to find a place that doesn't judge you?"

"The second."

"We were thinking about becoming muggles, but when we figured that you were going to make your own island we just sort of . . . we just wanted to keep using magic."

"Just because I wasn't planing to do it doesn't mean I can't," Harry mused, "it does have a certain appeal doesn't it?"

"Do you want me to start researching how to do it Harry?" Hermione asked.

"Yeah," Harry agreed slowly, "thanks."

"So what about it?" Susan asked, biting her lower lip. "Can Hanna and I join your school and country too?"

"Sure," Harry agreed, "friends?"

"Friends," she agreed.

"Now about you wanting to take Ron's place?"

"Can we talk about that later?" Susan asked with a blush. "It took us two days to work up the courage to approach you two and it's kind of embarrassing to find out that we were wrong about . . . well, you know."

"Drat," Harry muttered, "guess that means no harem for me."

"Harry!" Hermione protested, shocked.

"I've always wanted to lay back on a pillow eating peeled grapes." Harry explained with a snicker.

poof

Harry's chair transformed into a beanbag chair and Dobby handed him a peeled grape.

"Harry Potter sir will be needing elvies in this new land. Elvies who are allowed to clean anything they want as free elves, yes?"

"...I suppose so. As long you leave the peeled grape feeding to human women, and burn that genie outfit you're wearing."

"Is deal!"

AN: Just your standard Harry says to hell with the bloody inbred bastards and forms his own nation. We've all seen it a million times . . . haven't we? Treck, dogbertcarroll, SP, added a bit of much needed polish.

Omake by Red Jacobson

Harry was sitting in the Common Room; staring into the fire while his mind was still occupied with the bizarre conversation with the two Hufflepuffs. It was a couple of days after the conversation in the Library; and; even though he didn't want to know; he couldn't stop himself from wondering just what Hannah meant about being able to switch. Fortunately, that train of thought was derailed by his bushy-

haired best friend, who was practically bouncing with excitement as she came through the portrait hole.

Harry smiled at Hermione as she moved to sit down next to him; wondering what she had discovered that had her so excited. He didn't have to wait long as she looked around and saw that there was nobody in listening range, and said quietly, "Harry! You aren't going to believe what I found out as I was researching the charms we need! One of the things you are able to do; since you are establishing your own country; is set your own laws; and; you can give Snuffles asylum! He can be a citizen of your country; and won't have to hide anymore! Isn't that wonderful?"

A huge smile broke out and spread across his face. "And, if he won't have to hide; I can live with him during the Summers! Hermione, that's brilliant!" And, surprising the wits out of Hermione; he put his arms around her and pulled her into a hug.

'Harry's hugging me! Oh, that feels nice, he's never hugged me before.' Hermione thought; before returning the hug.

They sat there, not really noticing the odd looks they were getting as others came into the Common Room; until Ron came in and made a snide comment. Looking up; they both seemed to realize they were still holding each other and broke apart, blushing.

Not-Quite-An-Omake by SP

"You thought that?" Hermione asked with a look of horror on her face.

"Most of the school did . . . well, does." Hanna said with a shrug. "You have to admit that the three of you didn't spend too much time away from each other."

"That doesn't mean that . . ." Hermione trailed off.

"We know that," Susan agreed, "now."

Harry took a speculative glance at Hermione, "I have to admit... It does have a certain appeal, doesn't it?"



Hermione noticed his glance and gasped, "Harry! ...With Ron?"

"Well... No. Lavender, sure... Ginny, maybe... And Draco is almost a girl, but not Ron."

"Add in the relationship we thought you two had with Weasley," Susan sighed, "made sense that you wanted to find a place that wouldn't judge you . . . like we do."

"Like you judge me or like you want to find a place that doesn't judge you?"

"The second."

Harry muttered, "I'd judge you. Probably a 9.7."

"Harry, did you say something?"

"Nothing we can't think about later," he added with a lick of his lips.

Hannah sidled up and whispered quietly, "9.30, 2nd floor, classroom across from the statue of Erodus, the easily allured. Bring the bookworm if you want me to score you."

OMAKE: Conspiracy

"I'm afraid that you'll all have to ignore the evidence exonerating Sirius Black for my plans to proceed," Dumbledore said with an odd look on his face, "that isn't what I wanted to say."

"It's the charms we put up to insure truthfulness," Amelia explained.

"But those were only supposed to work on other people," Dumbledore protested. "That's why I insured that I would be the one to cast them."

"Then it's a good thing I had them recast," Amelia said with a grin, "why does Sirius Black being found innocent affect your plans?"

"Because my current plan is to have Sirius die in front of Harry in the Department of Mysteries, then Voldemort takes control, Harry sacrifices himself for the greater good, and I show the world that I

faked my death . . . then we all get pie. That's why I framed Sirius in the first place."

"I see, what else have you done that you don't want anyone to know about?"

"Well," Dumbledore began reluctantly. "To start with, my brother isn't the one that likes to nail goats . . . then I said, do it John he's a tyrant . . . that stupid Arch Duke sitting in his car thinking he was better than us, I sure showed him . . . then I destroyed the acceptance letter this guy sent to an art school, think his name was Adolph or something stupid like that . . . so they stopped fighting each other and had a christmas truce, not on Albus Dumbledore's watch . . . I had to cut them up, they thought they were better than me. Kinda like the name the papers called me though, Jack has such a nice ring to it . . . I saw old Adolph again and he was feeling a bit down and I said, you know what you should do? You should join a political party . . . I told those suckers that if they didn't fire on the fort, the Union wouldn't respect them . . . Adolph was feeling discouraged so I told him to write a book . . . So I said to myself, you're on a grassy knoll, no one can see you and I . . . and I told Joe, they're going to betray you. The only thing you can do is get them first . . ."

AN: Dumbledore is responsible for most everything that went wrong in the last hundred and some years. Take that everyone else, I think I've got the most evil Dumbledore of all.

Another by tumshie

"...So I said to Henri Paul another drink won't do any harm..."

A few more by meteoricshipyards

"Come on, Teddy. You? too drunk to drive?"

"Dick, they really are out to get you!"

"Jerry, I'm a firm believer in second chances. If you want my suggestion, pardon him."

"Jimmy, it's a civilized world. Violence in response to violence doesn't solve anything. You know that. Wait for them to calm down..."

"And I said 'trickle down' and he bought it, hahahaha."

Another by davidiusbrown

"That damn muggle was proclaimed the first to fly across the Atlantic. I sure showed him."

Another by nimbus225

"I told that Jap guy, Tojo I think his name was, that if he wanted to make an impact go after the biggest place."

Omake: The Highlander or Brave Scotland

"I am very disappointed in you Petunia," the old woman said in disgust, "to think that my daughter, my flesh and blood would treat her nephew this way."

"Mother . . ."

"Silence," her mother commanded, "Harry is coming with me. I refuse to leave my grandchild with the likes of you, I shall be back in a few months to see if Dudley needs to go also. S'not healthy for a boy his age to be so big."

"Mother . . ."

"Not one bloody word," she hissed, "come along Harry."

"Yes grandmother," Harry agreed shyly.

"Call me Grannie lad," she said cheerfully, "do you have all your things?"

"Yes Grannie," Harry agreed.

"Then let's go home."

"Where's that?"

"The most wonderful place on earth," the old woman replied, "Scotland."

|||||

"Harry," the old woman began, "me husband was Irish, yer pa was Welsh, ye' were born in Shetland, and yer mam was Scottish."

"What's that mean?"

"Means yeh don't have even a bit in common with the bloody Sassenach," she said proudly.

"What's a Sassenach?" Harry asked.

"Bloody terrible cursed creatures they are," the old woman said, "Ie me put it this way. Yer aunt was born in England and look what happened. She's me daughter an I lov'er but look at er. An take that bloody oaf she married, no better example of a bloody Sassenach yu'll ever find. The bloody bastard."

"I don't wanna be a Sassenach," the frightened child sobbed.

"Good boy."

|||||

"Look at the boy in the dress," Draco crowed.

Almost negligently, Harry's hand formed a fist and propelled it into the boorish boy's face.

"What is the meaning of this?" Snape demanded.

"Mocket Sassenach scunner," Harry said defiantly. "glaikit."

"What?"

"It's Highland Scott language," Minerva explained with a sigh. Invented to confuse tourists and Englishmen, she neglected to add. "You only hear it in the really small villages. Come along Mr. Potter."

"Spurtle skelp."

"Stop that nonsense right now," McGonagall said calmly after they'd turned the corner, "I am neither a tourist or English . . . not a Lowlander either."

"Right then," Harry agreed cheerfully.

"Now what was that all about?"

"Little bugger insulted my kilt," Harry explained.

"Oh . . . ten points to Gryffindor for showing pride in your noble heritage and another fifty for defending it from a useless brat who showed the poor judgement of being born to an English family."

Omake Common Sense

"And that's the plan Lils," James said with a grin, "Peter will be the secret keeper while Sirius here acts as the decoy."

"It's flawless," Sirius agreed, "we really are brilliant mate."

"I know," James agreed, "no way that plan could go wrong."

"Unless Sirius was forced to tell it to them and then Peter would spill his guts to prevent spilling his guts," Lily said in a sing song voice, "other than that I . . ."

"What do you suggest then?" James asked.

"Why don't we make me the secret keeper?" Lily asked. "And I'll stay in the nice safe house with Harry."

"Um . . ."

"And Sirius can bring us food when he comes to visit his godson," Lily continued, "Harry stays safe, we stay safe, even Sirius can stay safe if he sleeps in the spare room."

"Can we do that?" James looked at Sirius who shrugged.

"Who's the Charms Mistress here?" Lily asked. "We are planning to use a charm right?"

"So there's no way Voldemort could get us?"

"Not unless I decide to go out and tell him," Lily agreed, "and I'm not planning to do that."

"Uh . . . well . . . good job Lils," James said with a shell shocked look on his face, "I can't help but feel we averted something horrible."

AN: It always bothered me that Dumbledore was the secret keeper for the Order Headquarters and was able to spend time there. One wonders why Lily or James didn't become their own secret keeper, so long as they stayed in the area protected by the charm then there wasn't any way to . . . ah well, just another plot hole that's been needling me.

Some Omake for Sailing

Omake by dogbertcarroll

Everyone stared at the name painted on the side of the ship and then turned to Luna.

"I thought it was suppose to be 'Murphy was an Optimist?' Ron spoke up.

Luna paused in thought. "I guess I misheard."

And thus the 'SS Murphy's Optometrist' set sail.

Omake by davidiusbrown

Harry Potter slept lightly alone in his stateroom. Alone, because only he and the Ship's Master shared the privilege of having their own cabins. Everyone else was doubled or tripled up, except for the Black Gang. They "hot raked". Harry really didn't want to know the details of this.

Ships Captains always slept lightly. Harry had quickly learned that being Captain was a 24 hour a day job. Ron would have been a bad Captain, him being always cranky when woken up from sleep. At sea, a Captain had to catch sleep when he or she could, and always, always, be alert and ready to listen when awakened. Harry had gotten used to this particular burden of command. But this time, it wasn't Hermione the Navigator reporting the ship's location after a midnight star fix, or Ron the Engineer reporting another dark wet incident in the dark wet bilge. It was Luna. And she was out of uniform. Drastically out of uniform. And she was singing...

"Luna Lovegood, is making another run.

Harry Potter, we're going to have great fun.

Set a course for adventure, your mind on a true romance.

It's Luna, exciting and nude.

Come aboard, I'm expecting you.

Luna Looooooooovveeeeeegood."

Addition by wonderbee31

Hmm, Harry smiled, last night had been fantastic, if a little strange, and he'd never felt so relaxed as he had then, even if Luna had had that strange penchant for singing in her sleep afterwards. He was almost ready to drop off competely, when he heard another tune and glanced over, only to see Luna, again out of her uniform, her most lovely and lucious body caught perfectly in the ray of moonlight that shone through the porthole, and she was singing softly enough that he had to strain to hear it:

Justtttt, lay right down and you'll hear a tale,

the tale of a faithful gal,

Who started from the bottom of your feet,

and enjoyed a three hour ride, a three hour ride...

Disclaimer: What can I say? Luna is a Lonely Lovegood.

Only First Years Have to Follow That Rule

The Dursley family was enjoying a nice meal, Petunia had cooked from the 'Elvis Presley's: Taking care of your Colon' Cookbook, consisting of candy bars deep fried in lard and sticks of butter fried in lard when the door bell rang.

With a growl of disgust, Vernon stalked towards the door and flung it open. "What is it?"

"Good afternoon." Standing on the door step was an odd girl with blond hair and a dreamy look in her eye. "Is your name Vernon Dursley?"

"What of it?" The slug growled. There was something about the girl that put his teeth on edge, something . . . freakish.

"I'm told that you have something you have no use for and I'd like to purchase it," the girl replied, "I'm prepared to offer you two ounces of gold to cart it off."

"What is it you want?" Vernon asked in a much more pleasant tone of voice. The man's piggy eyes gleamed with greed.

"Harry Potter," the girl replied. "Oh, and everything magical he owns in the house to complete the set," she added absently. Her entire attention was transfixed by a small bug crawling up the the door jam.

"Then you're a . . ."

"Lonely girl?" Luna suggested. "Yes I am, but it's not polite to point such things out."

"Let's see the gold."

"Let's see the goods," Luna countered.



Vernon smothered a grin. At least this freak knew The Rules of the Deal. "Dudley," Vernon called over his shoulder, "tell the freak to pack his things and get down here right now."

"But daaad . . ."

"Now." Vernon's tone brooked no argument. "Now then Miss?"

"Miss what?"

"What?"

"Huh?"

"What's your name?" Vernon demanded.

"It's best you don't know," Luna replied mysteriously, "that way they can't take him and bring him back."

Vernon considered the girl's words for a few minutes, the corners of his mouth twitching upwards against his will. "Fine," he agreed. "BOY, HURRY UP." He turned back to Luna. "Now then, I couldn't possibly let my precious nephew go for less than four ounces of gold."

"I think we should wait until I've had a chance to inspect the goods before we decide on the final price," Luna replied in an aloof tone.

"Fine," Vernon agreed sourly, in the traditional horse trader's manner of one upset by the aspersions cast on their character. "BOY GET DOWN HERE NOW."

"Coming Uncle Vernon," Harry agreed from the top of the stairs. He was clutching his owl's cage in one hand and dragging a trunk with the other.

"Is this him?" Luna demanded. She peered up the stairs at her friend.

"That's him," Vernon confirmed.

"Seems kinda scrawny for four ounces," Luna said with a frown.

"He's strong and knows how to cook," Vernon said quickly, "cleans too."

"Hmmm." Luna walked up to Harry and peeled his lips back. "The teeth don't look to bad anyway . . . my original offer stands, two ounces."

"I couldn't let my precious nephew go for less then four," Vernon protested, "he's family."

"Is this all his things?"

"Should be," Vernon agreed.

"Throw in any magical items you've got in the attic and I'll give you three," Luna offered after a second, "and that's only because I don't want to bother finding another boy for sale."

"Magical items?" Vernon asked dumbly, realizing he could get even more unnaturalness out of his life and for free, no less. "Deal."

"Then I'll just collect those other items and we can settle up," Luna said, "agreed?"

"Agreed," Vernon said with a smile. "Boy, help her collect her new things."

"Yes Uncle Vernon," the confused boy agreed. He followed Luna up the stairs and into the attic. "Luna, what's this . . ."

"Not now," Luna whispered, "I'll explain later."

Harry pursed his lips, trying to decide if he trusted the odd girl with his life. On the other hand, she was getting him away from his 'loving' family. "Right," he agreed. Luna selected several odd items including an old carpet bag and thrust them into Harry's arms.

"Come on," Luna demanded, "I don't like this place and I'd like to be away as soon as possible." Without waiting for a reply, Luna scampered down the stairs and to the front door. When Harry caught

up to her, she was handing three large coins to his uncle who was looking more pleased then Harry could ever remember.

"Pleasure doing business with you girl."

"Goodbye," Luna replied, "come along Harry."

Harry gathered his things and followed the girl to the street and watched as she pulled out her wand to summon the Knight Bus. "Can you tell me what this is about now?"

"Father agreed that I could have a pet this year," Luna said happily, "isn't that grand?"

"So you want me to help you pick out your pet then?" Harry asked slowly. Luna just smiled wider in reply. "Or . . . oh."

Harry was quiet for a few moments as he gathered his thoughts. "Is that legal?"

"Oh, yes. How do you think the house elves got started? They were originally wizards who were captured and enslaved. The change into what they are now took many centuries and quite a bit of both dark and light magic, it's both why they are so subservient, despite being quite powerful, and why they are so happy being so." Luna said with a small smile.

"So... I'm a house elf now?" Harry scratched his head, thinking that being a house elf was probably a lot like living with the Dursleys, except with better food and less work.

Luna giggled, a light hearted tinkling sound. "Of course not. Those spells were lost long ago. You are my pet, although some of the rules for house elves probably still apply, since you are capable of magic and intelligent. We'll have to look it up when we get a chance, I only looked up the rules for pets. It's probably best to ask the house elves for the details, now that I think about it, they should know."

"What are the rules for pets?"

"Well I have to pay for any damages you cause, but as you are quite rich I can have you do that. It's really not important, because I didn't buy you for your wealth after all. You have to sleep in my bed while we are at Hogwarts and you can attend classes with me, as long as you aren't a disruptive influence otherwise I have to leave you with Hagrid while I'm in class."

"I have to sleep in your bed?" Harry nervously asked.

"Yep," Luna gave him a quick hug before the bus made another ninety degree turn and she had to grab onto a handrail to keep from rolling down the isle, "and you feel like an excellent cuddle pillow, so I definitely got a good deal buying you."

"Won't your roommates complain?"

"I put up with their pets shedding and screeching at odd hours, not to mention all the snoring and the girls who have nightmares about Hagrid all the time, so they'll just have to get use to it."

"Nightmares about Hagrid, but he's not scary, though some of his pets are."

"I know, but they keep moaning 'hairy' for half the night and climb out of bed flushed and sweaty, so it's obviously Hagrid they are having nightmares of. I can't think of anyone at school harrier then him."

"Uh . . . uh, where are we going?" Harry thought it prudent to change the subject before it got more embarrassing.

"Diagon Alley," Luna replied, "to do some obligatory shopping."

"Obligatory shopping?"

"It's wizarding tradition to go shopping after you leave your relatives house for the last time . . . didn't you know?"

"There are traditions like that?" Harry asked in shock.

"Would I make something like that up?" Luna asked through half lidded eyes. "Come on." She grabbed him by the hand and dragged him to the first store.

"What can I do for you?" The proprietor asked.

"I just got a new pet and I wanted to get some things for him," Luna replied. "Toys and what not."

"I don't want any toys Luna."

"Do you need any special food?"

"Whatever you eat," Harry said with a shrug, "or I could cook myself something."

"Oh . . . I guess all I need is a collar then," Luna said. "Add a tag that says his name is Harry and that he's property of Luna Lovegood."

"I'm not going to wear a collar Luna," Harry said stubbornly.

"But what if you get lost?"

"No," he said firmly.

"Fine," Luna agreed, "then I will."

"Hmwa?"

The odd pair walked out of the pet shop a few minutes later. Luna was happily jingling the tags on her collar that announced to the world that she's been given all her shots and Harry was following behind with an odd look on his face and a leash tucked into his back pocket.

His collar she had tucked in her purse along with a spare leash. Harry had caved rather quickly when she brought up tattooing as an option. 'Pity, I think having my name in a heart on his bum would look nice. I wonder if the spell to make dark marks is hard to cast.'

"Where to now?" Harry asked. He felt faint. "Another shop?"

"Shopping is tedious," Luna replied, "I wouldn't write an article about it so why would I want to do it? Let's go home so I can introduce you to father."

"Sounds good to me," Harry said with a shrug. He followed the addled girl out of the alley and watched as she summoned the Knight Bus for the second time that day.

Luna's father was waiting for them when they got back to the Lovegood residence. "And just who is that?"

"That's my new pet Harry Potter," Luna chirped.

Harry stared at the family motto engraved above the door trying to read it. 'If you can't dazzle them with...' But his attention was quickly drawn back to Luna's father before he could puzzle out the heavily faded words.

"I thought I told you that you weren't to get a pet Harry Potter?" Her father asked sternly.

"No father, you said that I was not to have a pet Ha-ey a butterfly and I did not get a pet butterfly of any type."

"Hmmm . . . carry on then." He announced grandly, recognizing that he'd been outmatched in this little game of wits. 'I knew teaching her to play fifth dimensional chess in her head when she was a baby would come back to bite me on the ass.'

"Thank you father. Come on Harry, let's get something to eat."

"Sure," Harry agreed. This summer was looking up already.

Harry spent an exhausting couple of hours, as Luna worked him like a klegghorn (He wasn't quite sure what that was, so he had to take her word for it). He mastered the cuddle, the snuggle, and the surprise hug in no time flat.

She had forced him to take a couple of breaks and drink some lemonade, as he'd turned a bit red and she didn't want him to suffer from heat stroke.

She also taught him how to knee greasy headed people in the groin and how to give wedgies to albinos' wearing robes on a couple of life size animated drones she just happened to have in the back yard for that purpose.

Despite all the hard work he put into mastering these new skills, she had him drilling in them repeatedly until he could do them perfectly at a moments notice, he found himself feeling strangely energetic and some feeling he'd never felt before, well not during the summer anyway. He knew it has something to do with a Patronus...

"Just where is he going?" Luna's father demanded.

"We're going to my room father," Luna replied, "I'm tired and I wanted to turn in early."

"Put him out before you go to sleep," he ordered, "I don't want any messes in the house."

"Harry is house trained father," Luna said proudly, "and my book on pet care says that it's important to have your pet sleep in the same bed as you."

"What book is that?"

"The one I wrote last week father," Luna replied.

"Well . . . if it was in a book then it must be true." He nodded to himself, thinking of the bushy haired young witch who had informed of that fact, while handing him a pamphlet on something about house elves and vomit, just before Luna had gotten excited and started writing her book on pet care last week. 'Hmmm...'

"That's what I thought too father," Luna said with a pleased smile, "we're so smart."

"That we are daughter, goodnight then." He nodded and went off to the den to drink some fire whiskey and wonder where he went so right on raising her. 'I didn't know I was that good a parent, but results don't lie. One of the top scorers in class, an ace reporter, and running

rings around me to get what she wants. Damn, I'm proud of her. She's just like her mother.'

"Good night, come on Harry." She grabbed his arm and led the shell shocked boy up the stairs.

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"Order . . . Order . . . Order of The Phoenix hoooooo," Albus called out as he brought the Sword of Gryffindor to his face.

"We're already here Albus," Minerva said with an annoyed sigh, "what is it?"

"Harry Potter . . . has gone missing," he said dramatically. "We must find him."

"Do you think perhaps it has something to do with this special edition of the Quibbler that just came out?" Minerva demanded sternly.

"Hmmm. Boy-Who-Lived sold by relatives to first person to offer them three galleons. Albus Dumbledore implicated in child abuse ring," he read, "luckily one of our fine undercover reporters made the purchase rather than someone who can't be trusted . . . we assure you that Harry Potter is not being kept a safe-house on Heard Island near Antarctica. Order, away." With that, Albus leapt to his feet and ran out of the room.

"Do . . . do you think he wants us to follow him?" Molly broke the silence that had descended over the room after the Headmaster left.

AN: Not sure I've seen this idea, Luna has purchased herself a new pet. That pet is Harry Potter. dogbertcarroll and neil reynolds provided a bit of polish and some scenes for this. Probably Luna/Harry if I ever get around to writing a lot of this.

Obligatory South Park Reference by davidiusbrown

"Luna, what are you doing?"

"Red Rocket, Red Rocket, Red Rocket."



meteoricshipyards

"I was going to get a centaur, but that would have been a lot more work than getting a Harry Potter. They're hard to litter train."

- - -

"Miss Lovegood! You can't have Harry Potter as a pet!"

"According to the 1043 code of wizarding law, section 7 paragraph 3, as long as I bought him legally, and he's non-disruptive, I can."

"But that law is over 800 years old!"

"It's obviously stood the test of time, then, hasn't it?"

"Mr. Potter! What do you have to say about all this?"

"She feeds me better than the Dursleys ever did."

Disclaimer: Guess what this is?

Yet Another Hermione forms Harry's Harem idea

"Harry," Hermione screamed in excitement as she burst into the common room. "You'll never guess what I just learned."

"What is it Hermione?" Harry replied mildly.

"I think I've figured out where Voldemort gets all his power," Hermione replied. "I was just reading this book on foreign forms of magic and they mentioned a magical technique that allows a wizard to draw magic from his followers."

"So what?" Ron asked.

"Don't you see? That's why Voldemort is so powerful," Hermione explained. "He's linked to so many people in the form of a Dark Mark. If you take advantage of this magical technique I found then I believe that you'll be able to tap more power from your . . . uh . . . followers due to the nature of the bond."

"Go on."

"I'd like to do a bit more research before I say more about it," Hermione said with a blush. "But I want you to promise that you'll at least consider it if I'm right . . . ok Harry?"

"Sure Hermione," Harry agreed. "I promise."

"Thanks Harry." She threw her arms around him and kissed him on the cheek. "I'll be in the library if you need me."

"She's gone batty again mate," Ron said with a laugh as their friend left the room.

"She wouldn't be Hermione if she didn't every now and again."

"True . . . care for another game of chess?"

"Sure, but I'm calling in backup," Harry replied, as Hedwig flew in and landed on his shoulder.

Ron laughed, "Do you really think she'll help?"

Harry shrugged, "Couldn't hurt."

Hedwig nipped his ear lightly to remind him that he shouldn't shrug when she was balanced on his shoulder.

Hermione returned a few hours later, breathless and sporting a light blush.

"Hey Hermione," Ron said absently. "Checkmate."

"Damn," Harry moaned. "Well at least I lasted longer with her help. What's up Hermione, you find anything?"

"I hate to ask," Hermione began nervously.

"What is it?" Harry asked.

"Well . . . I've exhausted the school library, I'm going to need to order some more books if I'm going to be able to do anymore research."

"You really think this is important?"

"Yes Harry," Hermione agreed. "I really do. Otherwise I'd never even think of asking you to . . ."

"Stop," Harry said with a smile. "See if they can take it from my vaults and promise that I can sleep on your floor for a few weeks after we graduate if you drain my account. Use Hedwig if you want, she's been idle for too long and it's be good for her to stretch her wings a bit."

Hedwig hooted in agreement, not having enjoyed getting beaten in chess, as she really didn't like the 'no threatening the pieces rule' that she felt had cheated her out of victory.

"I promise Harry," Hermione agreed quickly. "And if this works you won't be sleeping on my floor or couch . . . unless you do something stupid."

"Ron?" Harry asked after their friend was gone.

"Got me mate," Ron said with a matching look of confusion. "Nother game of chess?"

"Loosing five times in a row is my limit," Harry replied.

"Six might be your lucky number?"

"No."

"Wanna play something else then?" Ron asked. He scratched his chin trying to think of a game that gave Harry no chance of winning. "How bout . . . Squakmark?"

"What in the hell is Squakmark?" Harry demanded. "Is it a wizard game?"

"Yeah," Ron agreed, "a wizard game. It's just like chess except . . . uh . . . black gets the first move."

"Not a chance."

"Checkers then?"

"Set up the board."

"We'll use the chess set. Half the fun is watching the pawns try to jump the queen when the knights are nearby."

Several games later, Hermione wandered back with a pensive look on her face. "What is it Hermione?"

"Ok," Hermione began. "I've determined that the Dark Mark is dark magic, hence the name."

"So that avenue of research is closed then?"

"No, I expected to find that. I did however find another way," Hermione babbled. "My earlier research seemed to suggest this and it also makes me wonder if Voldemort's Dark Mark is granted in a similar ceremony. If so then that opens up all sorts of disturbing images that I suppose can be used as propaganda. No, my most recent research has confirmed what I first suspected."

"I'm glad to hear that."

"And remember Harry," Hermione said firmly. "You promised to consider it."

"I know."

"That said, I'm afraid I need to borrow a few more Galleons."

"More books?"

"Something to translate some of the spell books I got," Hermione explained. "I didn't know that they'd come in languages besides English. I suppose I could ask Padma and Parvati to help me with the books in Hindi, but that's only one of the languages. I might be able to find someone else to help me with the Chinese. But I doubt for instance, that I'll be able to find anyone that speaks Arabic, Farsi, Japanese, or Turkish."

"Go ahead," Harry agreed. "I told Gringotts to give you access, just don't abuse it."

"I won't Harry," Hermione said in excitement. She leaned forward and kissed him on the cheek. "Thanks."

"Wanna go find something to eat?" Ron asked.

"Sure," Harry agreed, "bet the house elves would make us something if we asked nicely."

"Bet I could eat my own body weight in cake," Ron mused.

"You're on," Harry agreed. He held out his hand. "Looser has to wear a pink dress to class for a week?"

"Deal." They shook hands and went down to stuff themselves silly. On their way back from the kitchen to find a dress, they ran into Hermione again.

"Have you figured anything else out?" Harry asked with a fairly good facsimile of interest.

"Yeah," Hermione said with a blush. She seemed to be avoiding his eye. "I found that the ceremony I found was the only way of . . . doing something similar to the Dark Mark without using dark magic."

"Well . . . we expected as much."

"Yeah," Hermione agreed. "Um . . . can I ask you a question?"

"What is it?"

"Would you do something you'd rather not do if you knew it would defeat Voldemort?"

"Yeah why?"

"Well . . . would you try something you didn't think you were ready to try to beat him?"

"What's this all about?"

"I'll tell you later," Hermione said in a low voice. "Well?"

"Yes."

"Um . . . last question, would you share something that you'd normally want to keep to yourself if it meant you could help a friend with something important?"

"Hermione, anything you need to use of mine, I would gladly drop in your lap at a moment's notice, if it'd help you with your project."

"Thank you Harry," Hermione stammered, blushing heavily.

"Mental," Ron whispered as Hermione wandered off.

"Getting worse anyway," Harry agreed. "Maybe we should take her to Madame Pomfrey, she's acting a lot more affectionate and shy then she usually does."

"Already talked to her mate, she told me all girls get like that around this age. Mentioned that Hermione was a bit of a late bloomer."

"Huh . . . well, I guess if it's normal." A smile formed on Harry's face.  
"Now let's go get you that dress."

"Still don't think it was fair to do the weigh in after I ate all that cake," Ron moaned.

"Had to do it after," Harry replied, "we forgot to do it before." And it guaranteed my win, he added mentally.

"Whatever," Ron growled, "but no lace."

"But lace completes the whole ensemble," Harry protested.

"We never said anything about lace," Ron said quickly.

"What if we make it purple?" Harry grinned, he knew the best they'd be able to get away with would be a tartan kilt, thanks to McGonagall, being on the staff, so without the lace it wouldn't really be embarrassing at all.

"Well . . . maybe if it's purple . . ."

IIIIIIII

"Ok," Hermione said loudly. "I suppose that you're all wondering why I asked you here?"

"Bloody right we are Granger."

"Before I begin, has everyone signed the contract?" They muttered in agreement. "Good, not that it matters. I charmed the door so everyone that comes through it falls under the same sorts of spells . . . now, I presume that no one here wants Voldemort to take power?"

"What's this about Granger?" Daphne demanded.

"It all started when I started doing research on the Dark Mark . . ." Jaws dropped as they all listened to Hermione's lecture.

Hermione quickly summed up her findings and moved on to part of the conversation where she tried to convince everyone to do things her way.

"And look at it this way," Hermione continued. "The ratio of wizards to witches is strongly in their favor. Several of us will end up with either older wizards, alone, or with people like Draco unless we agree to share. Now I've done some research and I believe it's because Death Eaters liked to target families with sons and I think it was because they were trying to extinguish family lines, there are even a few cases where girl children were spared so I . . ."

"That isn't exactly what happened Granger," Daphne interrupted. "There was some of that of course, but what your books failed to mention was that there were very few . . . male infants found after attacks. Boys are valuable, girls less so. Mum reckons that there were even a few attacks carried out with the sole purpose of kidnapping male infants for the market."

"That's why there are so many male Slytherins?"

"One of the reasons," Daphne agreed. "Another would be because the other side didn't wipe out families. I'd guess the fact that there are more witches would be because if the heir doesn't show signs of strong magic then . . . well, he tends to disappear. Daughters aren't so important . . . at least not among the families."

"Oh," Hermione said in a very small voice.

AN: I saw a challenge based on this idea several years ago. Don't remember who made it or where I saw it but the gist of it was that Hermione learns about sex magic and multiple wives can be used to boost power. Figured that I may as well write a bit of it while I'm on this odd harem kick. Got the idea for a few parts of this from one of Perfect Lionheart's fics, you can find a link to his profile in mine. A bit of polish was provided by dogbertcarroll.

Omake:

"What do you mean you don't want to be a Death Eater anymore?" Draco growled.

"Let's just say that I learned a few things about the ceremony to receive one's dark mark," the fifth year Ravenclaw replied dryly. "And I have several problems with it."



"What problems?" Draco growled. "Father hasn't told me much, just that it hurts a little at first and then it starts to feel good."

"Always figured you for that sort Malfoy," the other student said with a nod. "Guess this is goodbye then . . . say, you wouldn't mind if I asked Pansy out would you?"

"What?" Draco growled. "But . . . but she's my girlfriend."

"Yeah, but it's not like you're using her as anything but cover is it?"

"What do you mean by that?" Draco growled. The other student explained and Draco turned several shades paler than his usual cream colored complexion. That night, he gathered up his writing supplies and drafted a letter to his father. "Dear father, I learned several things today. Among them was why there are so few female Death Eaters and that I no longer wish to join the Dark Lord's service . . . or is that service the Dark Lord? No matter," he spoke as he wrote. "I don't suppose it matters. Your son, Draco."

Omake by: greywolfb

"Ok so what do we call ourselves?" Hanna asks the gathered witches.

"Well how about Potters United Siren Sisterhood in Yearning." Their bushy haired leader responds.

"I'm sorry Hermione but that acronym is already trade marked." Luna replies while thinking of Harry's reaction to her Puddlemere bikini stuffed in her trunk.

"Ok how about Vivacious Agents Granting Imaginative Noteworthy Augmentations?" Hermione tries once more.

Susan stares at the smartest witch in their generation and says "I move that Hermione isn't allowed to name ANYTHING ever again."

Disclaimer: Part two of Shamrock in chapter 31.

Blackthorn

"Wait, there's another name coming out . . . Harry Potter."

The hall erupted upon hearing the name of the boy who'd disappeared, the boy who'd turned his back on his native land in favor of another.

"What are we going to do Albus?" Minerva asked in shock.

"I think the Minister is going to have to have a long conversation with his Irish counterpart," Dumbledore said happily. Elated at the chance to bring Harry home. "And I suspect that I am going to have to do the same thing."

IIIIIIIIII

Harry was called out of his classes and into the Ardmháistir's office and waved towards an empty chair.

"What's this about then?" Harry demanded. "We were just getting to learn something interesting."

"I thought yew'd be studying anatomy in the back of the room with Ms. O'Connell again," a woman's voice said dryly.

"Aingeal," Harry said in delight, "I didn't see you there. When'd you get back?"

"Just now," she said dryly, "well?"

"Like I said," Harry said with an impish grin, "something interesting. We're both at the top of the class anyway so it's not like we'd be learning anything if we weren't preoccupied . . . ah . . ."

"With your independent studies?"

"Exactly," Harry agreed.

"Afraid my business wasn't all that pleasant," Aingeal said with a look of regret. "Seems the bloody English saw fit to enter you into a little contest."

"Ah, then be good enough to convey my regrets that while I'm honored to receive the invitation . . . uh . . . what's a polite way of telling the lot of 'em to bugger off and never bother me again?"

"Afraid it's not that simple," the Ardmháistir spoke up, "your attendance is required. Magic itself will enforce the contract if you don't participate."

"A binding agreement that I did not voluntarily enter?" Harry asked mildly. His cheek twitched, the only outward sign of his annoyance.

"The English are rather fond of their ancient artifacts," he agreed with a sigh, "I am sorry Harry."

"Well then, I suppose I'll just have to give a poor performance then."

"You will not do less than your very best," Aingeal snapped, "even if it is against your will. Once you start giving shoddy work for one thing then it's very easy to fall into the habit of cutting corners in everything else."

"Then I suppose I have no choice but to win the bloody contest then," Harry said cheerfully, "but not in the way they expect. Which one of you was it that taught me to take every advantage in a situation like this?"

"Better," she said with an approving smile, "just because you have to compete and just because you should do your best that does not mean that you must play by their rules. In fact, piss on their rules. You didn't sign up for this bloody contest."

IIIIIIII

"Well?" Minerva asked.

"I've spoken to the Irish and they've agreed that Harry will participate," Dumbledore said with a twinkle in his eye. "They assure me that he'll be here in time for the first event."

"It'll be good to see the child again," Minerva mused, "make sure he's eating right and all that."

"Yes it will," Dumbledore agreed. This was his chance, once Harry had a chance to see what he was missing by choosing a second rate provincial school over the finest academy of magic in the world. "Yes it will."

The months passed and several strong requests for Harry's presence and even more requests for an interview were ignored. Harry and his guardian finally arrived at Hogwarts a few minutes after the other contestants had gathered in the tent to wait for the first task.

"We're here for the contest," Aingeal announced as she walked through the gates with Harry, "now were's bloody challenge so we can get this over and done with?"

"Right this way," Dumbledore said with an oily smile, "I'm afraid that since you arrived here late that we're going to have to . . ."

"None of that," Aingeal snapped, "he's bound to complete three tasks in this bloody contest and he is not going to do an iota more."

"Fine," Dumbledore agreed, "if you'll wait in the tent?"

"As you wish," Harry agreed. Harry entered the tent and ignored the other contestants until his name was called. He was there because the bloody Brits had forced his participation, not to make friends with a lot of easily led morons.

"You're up Harry," the official announced.

"What do I need to do?"

"Just get the egg."

"Right." Harry walked out of the tent and was momentarily blinded by the change in light. The crowd, upon catching their first glimpse of 'the-boy-who-lived,' went wild in their efforts to deafen him with their cheering. After his eyes adjusted to the change in light, Harry looked up at his opponent. "Aren't you a big one?" Harry admired. He walked around and examined the beast for several seconds. "A very grand creature." He reached down and tapped the tip of his shoe.

"Problem?" A little man in a green suit that hadn't been there a second before asked.

"Opportunity," Harry said with a smile. "I'd like to make a bargain with you."

"What?" The little man asked suspiciously.

"I have no need for your gold," Harry said quickly.

"Another pair of shoes then?"

"See that egg over there?"

"What about it?"

"Gold isn't it?"

"So?"

"My task is to retrieve it," Harry explained. "Aid me and the egg is yours."

"Deal." The Leprechaun snapped his fingers and the egg appeared in his hands. "Here you are young sir."

"And now that I've completed my task," Harry said loudly. "Here is the egg to complete our bargain."

"A pleasure," the Leprechaun said with a bow. "Call me when you need another pair of shoes," the little man's said as he began to fade away.

"I will," Harry promised. He turned back to the judges table with a smirk. "Looks like I've completed your task, good day."

"Wait," Dumbledore yelled.

"Yes?"

"You'll need that egg to complete the next task."

"Oh?" Harry said with a grin. "Guess I'll have to withdraw then, pity."

"I'm afraid not," Dumbledore sighed, "we'll just have to work something out. In the mean time, I'll have a student show you back to your assigned quarters."

"What quarters?"

"I've arranged a place for you to stay while you compete in the contest," Dumbledore explained, "you'll be bunking with the Gryffindors and . . ."

"Piss on that," Harry growled, "I'm going back to Eire. I'm forced to compete in your bloody contest, I'll be damned if I have to attend your cursed school as well."

"Nicely said," Aingeal said in approval, "come along Harry. It's time to go home."

"Yes Aingeal," Harry agreed.

"You're going to need to show up early to the next contest," Dumbledore called after them, "and to bring a friend."

"Trouble in paradise?" Maxime asked with a grin.

"Not now Olympe," Dumbledore said sourly.

Harry's hands were shaking with rage as they walked the path back to their homeland. "Who's that bloody bastard think he is trying to run my life like that?"

"Apparently being the Headmaster of a school allows one to do such things in that backward place," Aingeal mused, "pity they aren't enlightened like we are isn't it?"

"Guess the poor bastards couldn't work past the handicap of not being Irish," Harry laughed. A bit of his cheer returning. "Why'd you think he wanted me to bring a friend?"

"Who knows," she replied, "but I assure you it won't happen unless they satisfy us that Ms. O'Connell will be safe."

"Thank you," Harry said softly.

"Can't let anything happen to my boy's best friend can I?"

Time past and Harry again found himself in the place he least wanted to be, Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

"Not very well kept is it?" Colleen whispered as they walked through the front gates.

"Wait till you see the idiot they put in charge of this dump," Harry replied loudly, "not surprising the idiot let's it go to seed like this."

"Ahem," Dumbledore cleared his throat.

"Speak of the devil," Harry laughed, "we were just talking about you."

"Is this your friend Harry?" Dumbledore chose to ignore the slight to him and the school as he bent down to inspect the girl.

"Eww, your breath smells like cheap whiskey," Colleen said loudly enough for the everyone to hear. She was not at all fond of the man that was trying to steal her best friend.

"Charming," he said with a frown. "Now if you'll just come this way . . ." Dumbledore took her hand and tried to lead her away.

"No thanks," she said, digging in her heels.

"It's vital for the contest that you come with me," Dumbledore said through clenched teeth.

"It's not enough that you force one of our citizens into your vile contest?" Aingeal demanded. "Very well, go with the old tosser."

"Yes Aingeal," she agreed sweetly. She turned back to Dumbledore with a frown. "If you try to touch me I'll scream you perverted old bastard."

Harry sat down and pulled a book out of his pocket to pass the time while he waited for the blasted event to begin.

"Hi Harry," a red head with a stupid look on his face said, "can I see your scar?"

"I wouldn't know," Harry replied, "I don't presume to know the abilities of those beneath me."

"Huh?"

"What do you want?" Harry asked impatiently.

"You gonna come to Hogwarts now?" Ron asked. "It'd be bloody brilliant if you did."

"And why?" Harry asked with as much disdain as he could load into his voice. "Would I want to go to a third rate school? Especially one in this . . ." His lip curled. "Country?"

"Hogwarts is the best school in the world," Ron prattled mindlessly, "we've got Quidditch and . . . course there are the Slytherins which I bet your school doesn't have but your school doesn't have Gryffindors either so . . . and Professor Dumbledore says . . . and we could be mates and have adventures and . . . my sister thinks you're . . ."

Harry couldn't understand why the red headed simpleton in front of him couldn't catch the hint that he wasn't wanted. Perhaps it's more evidence that centuries of inbreeding have taken their toll? Harry mused to himself. Or maybe he was dropped on his head a lot as a child?

"Look at the time," Harry said blandly, "it's time for my next task." Without waiting for a response, Harry walked away from the school



idiot and towards the lake where the other champions had already gathered. He tuned out the speeches, just a bunch of self important bastards listening to the sound of their own voice in his opinion, and only brought his attention back to the world when the other three champions dove into the lake.

Harry frowned in annoyance when he realized the likely location of his best friend in the world and shot an annoyed glare at the Judge's table. With a sigh, he walked over to the lake and cast a short spell that created a small bubble on the end of his wand. Taking the time to make a short statement into the bubble, he flicked it off his wand and into the lake.

"Um . . . don't you think you should go in there?" One of the spectators asked nervously.

"I believe that one should mind their own business," Harry said sharply. "I believe that it is rude to pull someone out of their native land just to have them compete in a silly little contest. I believe that when I am finished with this silly little contest that I will go back to Eire and with luck, I don't believe I will ever find the need to return to this . . . place. I do not believe that I will have to go into that lake to get my friend," Harry said as two mermen emerged with his missing friend. "Since I know that her cousins are polite enough to bring her to me." Harry took position of the groggy girl and said something unintelligible to the mermen. "Good day to you all." He finished as he staggered away under the weight of his friend.

Harry waited until he got back to Ireland before he stopped to inspect his friend to make sure that she hadn't been injured . . . well that and because he was a teenaged boy and she was his girlfriend, it wasn't the kind of opportunity that he was willing to pass up.

"Wouldn't you prefer me awake when you do that?" She purred.

"I'd have preferred you were awake to walk back yourself," he said absently, "you've gotten heavy."

"I have," she growled.

"Probably cause of all the wet clothes," he covered smoothly, "why don't we get you out of them?"

"Why don't we not," she stood up, "let's get back to the castle."

"I don't suppose saying that I'm sorry would put you in a better mood?"

"I don't know," she said. She made a show of thinking it over. "Why don't you try in a couple of weeks."

"Well . . ." he watched her walk away. "Damn."

It wasn't long before Harry was back in Hogwarts for the final task of the bloody tournament that they'd forced him to compete in and he sincerely hoped that it was for the last time.

"Hope I never see this god forsaken place ever again," Harry muttered to himself. He listened to Dumbledore blather on about the contest until the pertinent details of the last task had been covered and then promptly tuned the old bastard out. "Maybe Colleen'll have cooled down by the time I get back," he mused. "Who knew she was so sensitive about her weight?"

"You may start Harry," Dumbledore announced.

"Let's get this over with then," Harry said. Ignoring the entrance, he walked up to a section of the maze. "Would you please let me pass? I really don't wish to be in this contest but they've forced me to compete and because of that I don't think it would be cheating if you gave me a hand." The audience and judges watched in shock as the maze reconfigured itself to form a clear path from Harry to the center of the maze. "Thank you very much," Harry said politely. With a last withering look at the people who had forced him into the bloody contest, Harry strolled up the path and grabbed the trophy.

IIIIIIII

The crowd gasped as their hero disappeared. Unnoticed by most, several undercover Garda Síochána loosened their wands and took positions that would allow them to neutralize the Aurors in the

crowd. The few Aurors that did notice took care to stand very still with their hands at their sides, they were professionals after all and they knew not to bet against loaded dice.

"Mind sharing what this is about?" Amelia didn't take her eyes off the scene at the Judge's table. She'd taken the time off to see what rabbits the Irish contestant would pull out of his hat. Shame she had to run into something like this on her day off.

"The boy 's arrs," a voice replied, "we canna allow 'im ta be taken by you bastards."

"From what I've seen he's happy with you," Amelia said calmly, "I have no objections to him staying with you and I have no knowledge of what just happened to the child."

"Does yer government feel the same way then?" The voice demanded. "Or th' bloody bastard you have in charge here?"

"My Aurors will not participate in such an act," Amelia growled, "tell them green fifteen if anything happens. It's this week's code to stand down."

"Thankee kindly."

"If you get any info that one of my people . . . if anyone in my country is complicit in the child's kidnapping then pass it along to me," Amelia replied, "and we'll call it even."

"Will do."

"And if you find out where he is and need help in the retrieval then ask for it and it shall be yours. I don't like kidnappers."

IIIIIIII

"It figured it couldn't be simple," Harry sighed as he looked around. "No matter." Harry turned away from the grave yard and began walking.

"He's . . . he disappeared master," Wormtail said nervously. "I don't understand . . . the wards?"

"Curses," Voldemort squealed.

The world blurred around Harry as he strolled down what appeared to be a rough cobble road. Let the others use their flashy transport, they hadn't forgotten the old ways in Eire. They also hadn't forgotten to ward for it like the lazy wizards that seemed to inhabit every other country in Europe. Harry finished his stroll at the Hogwarts gates and tapped his shoe.

"What is it now?" A voice demanded from behind.

"Got this nice golden trophy," Harry said. "Left it behind and I thought you might be interested."

"Oh, aye. Thank you again lad."

"There's also a golden cup back at Hogwarts," Harry mused, "doubt it's being guarded."

"I'll look into it after I secure that trophy of yours," the little man promised as he began walking down the path.

"Be careful," Harry called after the leprechaun. "The Trophy's a portkey and god knows what kind of magic they've got on the cup.."

"I'll take care of it lad," the little man called back. "Don't worry."

After disposing of the Trophy, Harry walked through the gates through the crowds.

"Harry," Colleen squealed. "You're back."

"I'm back," Harry agreed. "When did you get here?"

"Aingeal brought me here after you went missing," she replied, "I wanted to be the first one to greet you when you got back."

"Does this mean you're not angry with me anymore?"

"Means we can go back to 'studying' when we get home," Colleen whispered into his ear, "we're going to have to put in a lot of work to make up for all the time we lost cause you were an insensitive bastard."

"So all I gotta do to make you forgive me is get kidnapped?" Harry laughed. "Good to know."

"Care to explain where you were Harry?" Dumbledore interrupted the conversation with a twinkle in his eye. "Or how you got back."

"Not really," Harry replied. Turning away from the Headmaster. Harry addressed his friends, "let's go home. I've had enough of this god forsaken place."

"Where is the Trophy Harry," Dumbledore demanded.

"None of my business," Harry replied over his shoulder. "I never wanted to compete in the first place, remember?"

"Harry, the trophy is connected to the cup. We can't hold another contest without both."

"Seems you have a problem then," Harry said with an unconcerned shrug.

"We're going to need the Trophy back before we can give you your gold Harry," Dumbledore tried again.

"Then I suggest you start chasing rainbows," Harry said as the Irish walked away. Harry couldn't say that his visit to Hogwarts had been pleasant. He'd been forced into a contest, belittled, had to endure the bloody Brits, not to mention the fact that his best friend had been kidnapped, and the murder attempts. Despite all that, it had been a productive year the trophy was gone and they'd never be able to wrest it away from its new protectors to force another child into a life threatening ordeal.

AN: You may be wondering what happened in the years between Shamrock and this fic. Sirius escaped and was granted asylum, that's about it. Harry had a happy life in Ireland before he was disturbed

and now he's going back to it. Mini Epilogue: Harry completed his schooling and married his first friend and constant companion Colleen O'Connell shortly after they completed their education. They probably had children and if they did Harry always told them the story of how he was rescued from prison and taken home to Eire by an Angel. Without Harry's blood, Voldemort was never able to resurrect himself and he lived a half life until finally running out of energy and fading away.

Omake by meteoricshipyards

"Headmaster, who's that with the Potter boy?"

"Him? That's our grounds keeper, Darby O'Gill. Unfortunately he retired a few years ago and didn't see fit to tell me."

IIIIIIIIII

"And I follered that blasted horse all the way to the ol' ruins on yon hill. And that's when I met ol' King Brian Connor 'imself, King of the Good People. It turns out that weren't no horse, but a pooka, sent to lead me away."

"And that was when you asked for the crock of gold?"

"Weel, not quite then. We sort of had a conversation first. But eventually, he offered me three wishes, and I asked for the crock of gold."

"And what did you do with it?"

"Well I ne'er got it, is what I did wi' it. Always remember, wee Harry, that when one of the Little people offer you three wishes, they'll try to get you to take another. And if you take the fourth, you lose them all. Which is what 'appened to me. An' me an edicated man, too!"

"Wow!"

IIIIIIIIII

"Top of the eve'ning to ya, Mr. Potter."

"I know you! You're King Brian!"

"Indeed I am. You've no doubt been talkin' to me friend Darby. He's a fiyne one to spend an' relaxin' time sittin', talkin', and drinkin', but always take his stories wi' a grain of salt, if you know what I mean."

"Yes, your Majesty."

"You're a right polite boy, Harry Potter. And I saw what you did to save that wee lass from the bull. I'd like to give you three wishes as a reward."

"That's very kind of you, your Majesty, but I don't need them."

"What do you mean you don't need them. Are you implyin' that the wishes of the Good People are nae good?"

"Oh, no, your Majesty. But my wishes have already come true. Someone came and rescued me, and brought me to where I really belong! I never have to go back to the cupboard again! I have all the food I need and clothes that fit. All my wishes have come true."

"An' you'd pass up the crock o'gold, even?"

"I don't have any use for it."

"So you have nae more wishes?"

"Well, there is one thing. . . ."

"And what be that?"

"I never had any friends until I came here, and Miss O'Cleary said you can never have too many friends, and friends are worth more than gold, begging your pardon, your Majesty. So, if it's all the same, I'd wish you to be a friend."

"You're a wise one, Harry Potter, and a well spoke, brave lad. I'll grant ye my friendship, and the friendship of the Good Folk. Now, you better be running along back to your school, before Miss O'Cleary starts to worry abou' you."

"Thank you, your Majesty! The top of the evening to you!"

"And the rest of the night, to you, Harry Potter, friend of the Fae."

Omake by Michael Bennett

"What do you MEAN half of our school student body are transferring to a better school? We are the FINEST OF THEM ALL!" shouts Dumbledore.

"There is worse news to come, Headmaster. Our school average drops from an EE, to a D if just a handful of them transfers. Sad to say, but it seems Mr. Weasley will be one of our top students if all those students succeed in transferring. Even that D is being disputed after the school board was tipped off that Severus was allowing the Slytherins to cheat on their Potions, and thats the only thing keeping

us from a T."



Disclaimer: Just another expanded Omake.

Sold

"Hermione . . . is that you?" Harry's nervous voice sounded tinny through the phone.

"Harry . . . Harry what is it?" Hermione demanded. "Are you ok?"

"You know how your dad wanted to go out drinking with me yesterday?"

"He found you?" Hermione asked in shock. "Wards that keep wizards out and my dad goes right through them."

"Yeah . . . um, he said he looked up the Dursleys and found me after the third try."

"Something wizards would have never thought of," Hermione laughed. "So you went out with my dad then? Where'd you go?"

"Some local pub," Harry replied. "Your dad knew the Publican so . . ."

"You went to uncle Terry's place?" Hermione interrupted.

"Uh . . ."

"Welsh Dragon and a British Lion on the sign?" She clarified.

"Sounds like the place."

"Oh . . . so did you try the house brew?"

"Just a bit," Harry admitted. "But . . . uh . . . while we were drinking, your father . . . sort of . . . offered to sell you to me."

"He's still doing that," Hermione giggled.

"So I told him I had about two quid and he took my offer . . ."

"Wish I'd been there to see that, not many people play along."

"And Gringotts sent me a letter asking if I wanted to store you in my vault," Harry said in a rush. "It's five Galleons a month for the basic plan, a one time fee of ten if I want to keep you in stasis, and the price goes up if I want to keep you in style."

"Oh you'd better keep me in style Harry Potter," Hermione said mock sternly, expecting Harry to laugh with her. The silence over the line began to make her nervous. "Harry . . . Harry you were joking weren't you?"

"Joke you say? Well, that's the thing. To be honest, Hermione, we stopped joking around the time we got the letter from Gringotts. You see, neither of us suspected goblins to be the type to play along. Especially going such lengths to do so."

"Harry." she managed in warning tone

"So of course we went to them to clarify the situation. And apparently according to goblins we entered magically binding contract. Your father tried to argue that for a contract to be valid there has to be

not only contractual capacity but also intent to be bound by the contract but well... you know how far behind magical world is legal-wise..."

"Are you telling me that just because you played along..."

"Basically. I didn't catch all the details but from what I understood when a wizard is contracting with Muggle intent of the parties is not taken into account. It has something to do with an old law that was

supposed to enable magical merchants to use compulsion charms to sell..."

"I don't care!" Hermione cut in interrupting a historical anecdote, proving her distress "I'm not some goods you can buy or sell. I'm a person!"

"Well apparently since you are Muggleborn..."

"Don't finish the sentence... Just don't."

"Sorry . . ."

"It's okay Harry," Hermione sighed, "we'll find a way to fix things."

"I'm sure," Harry agreed, "um . . . I haven't told you the worst part yet."

"What is it?" Hermione sounded tired.

"I'm not sure I should tell you over the phone," Harry demurred. "I think I should tell you in person . . . course it'd be harder for you to strangle me through the phone."

"It's not the kind of thing you share over the phone but you told me that my father sold me to you over the phone?"

"I wanted you to hear it from me," Harry explained, "it was the only way I could be sure to contact you before Gringotts had a chance to."

"I suppose I can accept that," Hermione agreed, "come over and share the rest of your news Harry."

|||||||

Gringotts had agreed to keep the news that Harry Potter had purchased a slave girl strictly confidential until Harry agreed that the information could be released. As a practical matter, this just meant that they charged twenty percent more for the information than would have otherwise been the case. Around the country, people considered the information they read in special editions of the Quibbler and the Prophet. A dozen plans were discarded and a dozen more were formed, Harry Potter was about to learn the true meaning of the old Chinese curse.

|||||||

Hermione's father pulled to a stop in front of his modest house and made no move to get out of the car.

"Aren't you coming?" Harry asked.

"My daughter has a very healthy set of lungs," he said conversationally, "I'm fairly sure she's in there, just waiting for a chance to vent her frustration on one of us for this little . . . misunderstanding."

"And?"

"And between the two of us, I think she might hold me at least partially responsible for what happened."

"You don't say?" Harry asked dryly.

"I know," he agreed, "but that's something you're going to have to learn kid. Women are irrational, even my little girl casts aside logic whenever it suits her purposes."

"So . . ."

"You're on your own," he agreed, "you go in there and I'm going to try to sneak past to hide in my office. There's a lock on the door and a weeks worth of food left from that time I had to hide out and wait for the noodle incident to blow over, I'm sure my lovely daughter and charming wife will be back to normal by then . . . if they kill you, I'll erect a statue to you in the front yard or something."

"Gee thanks."

"Nothing too ostentatious mind you," he continued. "Possibly a lawn gnome with Harry written on it or something . . ."

"I'll just be going then."

"Go with god my son."

Harry gathered his things and nervously approached the front door. He raised his hand to knock but the door was jerked open before he had a chance to reveal a scowling Hermione.

"Um . . . the goblins said that this was for you," He thrust a box into her hands. Hermione stared into the open box, her expression frozen as Harry grew increasingly nervous.

"And what, exactly, is this supposed to be?" she gritted at last through clenched teeth.

"Um, your collar?" Harry replied hesitantly. As Hermione's expression grew even more forbidding he hastily continued, "According to Grugtlank, if I don't want to keep you, um, 'en hareem' I think he called it...well, anyway, you need to wear that to show that you're the, uh, property of the Ancient and Noble House of Potter; that'll keep any Purebloods from bothering you and risking being sanctioned by the Wizengamot." He tried a small smile, which faded quickly in the face of her continuing bad temper.

"And what else does it do, if I may be permitted to ask?" she said stonily, huffing when Harry looked at her blankly. "I can feel the magic on this, Harry, and it's much more than a simple identifying charm. So what else does it do?"

Harry tried looking anywhere but at Hermione's face, finally settling for looking at his feet while he blushed furiously. "According to the Goblins, as my concubine you're only allowed to perform...certain

activities with me." He glanced up quickly to gauge her reaction before continuing, "The collar ensures that you can't break those rules, and that anyone who tries to force you to won't survive the attempt."

"Harry James Potter," Hermione growled, her voice rising with each word, "do you mean to tell me that you want me to wear A CHASTITY BELT!?"

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Hermione's father watched his daughter berate the sacra . . . er . . . young man that had so generously agreed to be the distraction. If his calculations were correct, his lovely wife would be going towards the disturbance leaving him plenty of time to slip through the back door. He tiptoed in and closed it behind him. And into his office where . . . where his unfortunately intelligent wife was waiting for him.

"Hello darling," he said with a large grin, "why don't you go see what has Hermione so worked up?"

"She already told me," his wife said with no expression on her face.

"She did?"

"So let me get this straight. You sold our daughter to her best friend, the one who's so shy and noble that he blushes when she hugs him and won't even touch her without an engraved invitation stating her acceptance of physical contact?"

"Errr, yes?" He agreed with sweat pouring down his face.

"Brilliant! I thought I was going to have to wait until I was fifty before I could get grandkids out of those two!"

"I'm glad you agree," he said happily, "shall we lock the door?"

"We've got two weeks of food and two gallons of lubricant," she said with a sultry grin.

"I love you."

|||||||

Luna walked into her father's office, wearing a pristine white dress and a determined expression on her face. Her father watched as she lowered his chair and wheeled it out from behind the desk. Luna took his former position and glared down at him.

"Lovegood," she said with a frown, "I'm of the mind to do a bit of business with you."

"What can I do for you?"

"You have a daughter named Luna I believe," she said with a cruel smile.

"Yes?"

"It just so happens that I'm in the market for a girl," she laughed, "I'll give you two galleons for her."

"No . . . my daughter may be worth two galleons to you but to me she's worthless, I won't sell."

"Why look what we have here," she pulled a stack of documents out of his desk, "these appear to be the deeds to your house and the Quibbler . . . shame if you lost them now hmmm? You know what nargles do to homeless young girls, after all."

"No . . . you can't," he sobbed, "she's all I have."

"All you had," Luna corrected, "sign the paperwork."

"How will I break the news to my poor innocent baby girl?"

"That's not my problem Lovegood," Luna said coldly. "I believe our business here is concluded."

"Wait," he begged as she was about to walk out of the room, "what do you plan to do with my innocent little girl?"

"Harry Potter has a birthday coming up and I owe him years of gifts," she replied with a smirk. "I dare say your little girl won't be innocent much longer." Her cruel laughter echoed in his ears as she walked out of his office.

"Why," he sobbed, "why did I . . . oh god what have I done." He took several deep breaths before walking to the door. "Luna, could you come in here for a moment? I have some bad news for you."

"What is it daddy?" Luna skipped into his office in her wearing a black suit that Snidely Whiplash would have been proud of and looked up at him with wide trusting eyes.

"I...I'm afraid Luna has bought you and intends to give you to Harry Potter as a Birth Day gift." Mr. Lovegood said haltingly.

Luna tilted her head to the side. "That can't be right. That would be the nicest thing she ever did for me and I'm wearing the black suit, so I'm the good twin for today."

"I know, honey, it really threw me too."

"Unless..." Luna examined the calender. "Nope, it's my turn to play Good Luna, so what could she be up to? I'll have to check this out."

Luna stroked the pencil this mustache she'd painted on her upper lip and went off to investigate.

Odd sighed and leaned back in his chair. Having twins was stressful work, thank god he was only raising the one. He couldn't imagine the stress of raising two pairs like Weasleys. 'I wonder where they keep the good Fred & George, you never see them around.'

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Abruptly, Harry stopped speaking, fell to his, knees and began shivering.

"What is it?" Hermione's rage transformed into concern. "Are you feeling alright?"

"I just had a chill go up my spine," Harry whispered, "like someone was stepping on my grave"

"Forget all that," Hermione snapped, "we need to get back to solving my problem."

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Lucius Malfoy walked into Hogwarts and to the Headmaster's office. Smiling cruelly, he flopped into a chair and propped his feet up on Dumbledore's desk.

"Was there something I can do for you Lucius?" Dumbledore asked with a sigh.

"I need you to provide me with an introduction," Lucius said calmly, "Harry Potter is staying with Hermione Granger at the moment and I need to speak with him."

"What? He should be locked in his relative's house," Dumbledore blurted. "Could we pretend I didn't say that?"



"Seems we both have something we want then don't we?"

|||||||

Back at Hermione's house, there was a knock on the door. Hermione stopped her whining just long enough to open the door.

"What?"

"Special delivery," the man replied, "have a giant cake here for a Mister H. Potter."

"Bring it in," Hermione agreed, "just put it over there."

"Sign here please." The Delivery slob took the clipboard back and vacated the Granger residence.

"Harry," Hermione called back, "why'd you get a giant cake here?"

"I don't know," Harry replied, more than a bit happy that his friend had been distracted. "I . . ." He cut off when the top of the cake popped off and unseen speakers began blasting the polka. "Luna?" Harry identified the odd girl who burst out of the cake and began undulating on the floor in a good imitation of a fish out of water.

"What are you doing Luna?" Hermione demanded. "Stop that."

"A cruel but beautiful businesswoman forced my father to sell me or risk losing the Quibbler and our home," Luna explained tearfully, "then she gifted me to Harry to ravish and fulfill every sick whim that crosses his mind." She looked at Harry hopefully. "Like right now for instance, if you wanted to slake your dark lusts on my body then you could do so." Another hopeful look. "Or I suppose you could Have me and Hermione do things to each other for your entertainment." Luna licked her lips as she gave Hermione a look that made the other girl shudder . . . this of course caused her to jiggle in a very interesting manner which only caused Luna's gaze to heat up.

"I . . ." Harry's gaze darted between the two girls. "Must be dreaming aren't I?" He sighed in relief. "Well, this is better than my usual dreams."

"You're not dreaming Harry," Hermione said reluctantly.

"So you expect me to believe that this is all real?"

"I admit that it's a bit far fetched," Hermione said, "but this is all real. Anyway, if anyone here is having an odd dream it's me."

"I've always dreamed that this would happen," Luna offered.

"Everyone pinch yourself," Hermione said. She pinched herself and looked up. "That hurt, so we all must be awake."

"I suppose," Harry agreed slowly, "I . . ." He cut off when there was another knock on the door. "That had better not be another . . ."

"I'm sure it won't be," Hermione said quickly. She walked up to the door and opened it slowly. "Professor Dumbledore?"

"May I come in?"

"Of course," Hermione agreed, "what can I do for you Headmaster?"

"I just need to have a short conversation with Harry," he replied.

"What is it sir?"

"Harry . . . I . . . there's a man that would like to speak with you," Dumbledore said slowly, "I've assured myself that you'll be safe for the duration of the conversation but the final choice is of course yours."

"Who is it?"

"Lucius Malfoy," Dumbledore said. His face looked like he'd eaten something sour.

"Show him in then," Harry said firmly.

"One moment," Dumbledore said. He walked outside of the house to where the Malfoy patriarch was waiting.

"Well?"

"Right this way Lucius," Dumbledore sighed. Lucius followed the old man into the house and walked swiftly up to Harry.

"Mister Potter," Lucius said coldly.

"Mr. Malfoy."

"Could you wait outside Albus?" Lucius asked. "There are things that Potter and I need to discuss that are not for your ears."

"It's alright sir," Harry assured the old man, "I'll be fine."

"If you're sure Harry," Albus said gently. With one last look, he walked out of the house and closed the door behind him.

"What's this about then?" Harry demanded.

Lucius got down on his knees so that he was eye to eye with Harry and held his cane horizontally with both hands.

"Harry," Lucius began with tears in his eyes. "You deserve this pimp cane more than I do. There's a wand core in it that can be replaced if the current one does not work for you."

"Uh . . . thanks," Harry said. "Sir."

"No need to call me sir Harry," Lucius replied. "Just . . ."

"Yes?"

"If you think of it, could you give a few pointers to Draco?" Lucius begged. "I'm afraid he's a bit of a momma's boy, poncy little git. I spent years getting laws on the books allowing wizards to have harems and I had hoped . . . no matter."

"Uh . . . hoped?"

"Why else do you think I joined Voldemort?" Lucius demanded. "It's certainly not because I'm an evil git."

"It isn't?"

"Nope," Lucius agreed. "It's cause Dark Wizards get laaaaaaid, how else do you think I got a fox like Narcissa?" Lucius pulled out a locket and opened it to show Harry the picture.

"She certainly is . . . naked."

"Isn't she just," Lucius agreed.

AN: Who else could I add? Mistress Padma and her submissive sister who of course switch places every couple of hours, Luna is the only one who notices and possibly have Luna not know they were twins before. Thanks go to dogbertcarroll, luinlothana, and Fenris for providing scenes and polish.

Omake: Luna Lovegood and the Boyfriend Stealing Bitch

Hermione Granger woke up that morning to the odd sight of Luna Lovegood dancing on the end of the bed screaming about how she was back and had did it. This sight seemed all the odder since school was out for the summer and she'd been home a week.

"Luna?" Hermione muttered sleepily. "What are you doing in my house?"

"What year are you in?" Luna demanded intently, her eyes more focused then Hermione could ever remember. "Tell me now."

"I just finished my fifth and you your fourth," Hermione groaned, "now wha." She paused to yawn. "What are you doing in my house?"

"Hermione," Luna said seriously, "this may seem hard to believe but I've just come back in time twenty years to prevent a horrible future world."

"Voldemort won?" Hermione gasped, the lack of sleep and disorientation making it much easier to accept Luna's stories then would otherwise be the case.

"Worse," Luna said sickly.

"Worse then Voldemort?" Hermione asked in horror.

"Yes," Luna agreed, "Harry killed him a few years from now. What happened after that was so horrible that it's painful to talk about." The girl shuddered, Luna looked up at Hermione and had tears flowing down her face.

"Have a seat Luna," Hermione said, motioning to the bed. "And tell me all about it so we can prevent it from happening."

"Ok," Luna agreed. She took a deep calming breath. "Ginny stole Harry and married him."

"That's it?" Hermione demanded. "I'm going back to bed."

"She used love potion to do it," Luna said quickly, "and Ron used it on you."

"Okay," Hermione agreed, "that is kinda bad."

"Kinda?" Luna said in outrage. "It ruined our lives. Sure Ginny was Happy with Harry for a little while, but after the first kid she lost interest in him. The next seven all had different fathers, I think the last three belonged to Draco and his bookends."

"That's . . . disturbing," Hermione admitted, "keep talking."

"I managed to weaken the influence of the potion enough so that Harry knew what was happening to him," Luna continued. She squeezed her eyes shut as she relived the memory. "I sometimes wonder if that was a mistake. Harry knew what was happening when he was away from Ginny, was suddenly allowed the freedom of his own mind . . . only to lapse back to his old self every time the ginger bitch came near him."

"What about me and Ron?" Hermione asked. "How'd that work out?"

"You wanted to be a successful career woman," Luna said, "he didn't want you to outshine him. He has a low level career at the Ministry and you're a homemaker. You have four children, the oldest, your daughter was sorted into Ravenclaw and was the top student in her year."

"Apple doesn't far fall from the tree," Hermione said proudly. She was more than a bit disturbed by the fate of her future self but was ignoring that in favor of focusing on the one good aspect of Luna's tale.

"Ron wasn't too pleased with that," Luna continued, "said that the entire family had been Gryffindor back to the founding and her brothers weren't pleased with the way she was always showing them up."

"What happened?" Hermione asked with growing dread.

"Nothing," Luna said to the other girl's relief, "until after she graduated. She'd been dating a boy for her last two years of school and they eloped within hours of the graduation. He'd seemed like a nice boy in the time I knew him, muggle born."

"So what was the problem?"

"He was also in Slytherin," Luna said simply, "Ron couldn't accept it. You told me he gathered up the boys and went out to bring her back . . . the boys returned and wouldn't look you in the eye. Ron returned with a satisfied expression on his face, later said that the family was pure again."

"And my daughter."

"I'm sorry," Luna said, "your daughter and her husband were later found in a shallow grave near Dover. No arrests were expected to be made."

AN: Doubt I'll write more of this, just put this out to get it out of my mind. Won't promise that I'm not gonna write 'Luna Lovegood and the Boyfriend Stealing Birch.'

"Stupid Dryad," Luna growled. She made a mental note to have her father send her favorite choppin axe.

Disclaimer: Same old Gabrielle becomes Harry's pet due to a bunch of bigoted purebloods.

## A Bird in The Hand

Fleur was sprawled out on her bed at her parent's chateau enjoying her time off when she saw her sister walk past dragging a large box. She briefly considered and immediately discarded the idea of finding out what type of shenanigans annoying sibling was planning to engage. She was on holiday and she really didn't feel up to ruining it. It wasn't like her sister couldn't take care of herself . . . okay, it wasn't like her sister was likely to come to harm due to her inaction. Having satisfied her concerns, Fleur closed her eyes and tried very hard to ignore the odd sounds coming from her sister's room down the hall.

Fleur didn't worry when her Sister didn't show up to dinner that night or when she skipped breakfast the next day. She just figured the lazy girl had been too busy to eat the night before and had slept in that morning. No, she didn't start worrying until lunch when a bit of prompting revealed that the staff hadn't seen the young girl since the day before. Of course, by then it was too late.

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Harry Potter was working in the garden when the car pulled up and emptied two men in cheap standard issue bureaucrat suits.

"Can I help you?" Harry asked. Automatically, his right hand dropped to seek the reassuring presence of his wand.

"Yes," one of the men agreed. He pulled out his wallet and showed an official looking identification card. "We're with Her Majesty's Customs and Revenues Service and we're looking for Harry Potter."

"May I get a closer look at that identification please," Harry said mildly. He took the card and examined it for a few seconds. "His too."

"Of course," the other man agreed.

"Well," Harry said after he was assured that they were genuine, "my name is Harry Potter. How can I help you two."

"Were you perhaps named after your father?"

"No," Harry said flatly. The two men shared a meaningful look. "You aren't here about nonpayment of taxes are you? I'll admit that I haven't looked into my inheritance so I can't be sure it's being dealt with."

"Nothing like that," the man hastened to assure him. "It's just that we expected you to be older."

"Oh?"

"You are Harry Potter the expert on predatory birds are you not?"

"I wouldn't call myself an expert," Harry demurred, "I only have the one."

"What kind of bird do you have?"

"Why don't I show you," Harry said. He whistled and Hedwig glided down from his window to perch on his waiting arm. "She's a snowy owl . . . *bubo scandiacus*," Harry said as he admired his owl. "They used to think they were the sole member of the *nyctea scandiaca* until recently but recent tests have shown that she's very closely related to a horned owl." He may not be Hermione but he was very motivated to learn anything that might help him better take care of his pet.

"She?"

"If she were male then she'd be pure white," Harry replied, "only the females and young have the dark scalloping."

"That explains it then," the man said with a hint of a smile.

"Well they've sent you a another bird," he said as his partner unloaded a large crate, "we aren't sure what it is. Looks a bit like a Pallid Harrier but well . . . take a look for yourself." Harry walked up to the box and inspected the bird through one of the air holes. "Well?" The man asked.



"Most of what I know is about owls," Harry said with a frown, "you're right though. It or rather she looks a lot like a Pallid Harrier or maybe a Montague's Harrier."

"How do you know it's a female?"

"Size mostly," Harry muttered, "I could be wrong. I definitely think it's from the genus Circus."

"So you're not sure what she is?"

"No," Harry admitted, "I might be able to identify her if I could get a picture or two to some people I know. Sorry I couldn't have been of more help but like I said, if it's not an owl then I don't know much about it."

"No problem Mr. Potter," he said with a grin, "we were just satisfying our curiosity. This magnificent creature was sent to you, this caused some confusion at first till we checked the records and learned that you have all the appropriate licensing and certification to own and care for predatory birds."

"Oh," Harry said in surprise. "Thank you then." He shifted his arm and Hedwig flew off to perch on one of the nearby trees.

"Pleasure to be of service," the man replied, "we just have some forms you need to sign here."

"Of course," Harry agreed. He looked over the documents and signed at the appropriate places. "Not that I'm complaining mind you, but do you guys usually make deliveries?"

"We were curious to know what she was," the man replied, "especially after 'n hour of flipping through the books didn't get us an answer. Besides, it'd be a crime to keep this girl locked up at the airport till you were able to pick her up."

"True," Harry agreed. He pursed his lips as he thought of something. "Hypothetically, how would one turn in a man that's been defrauding the government by cheating his taxes?"

"Give us the name and we'll take care of it," the man said seriously. "Might even be a reward in it for you."

"Well." Harry gave a meaningful look at Vernon's car pulling into the driveway. "I'm not sure I could turn in my uncle like that. I know it's wrong that he's been cheating his taxes for the past few years and even though I don't get along with him, he is still family."

"We understand Mr. Potter," the man said with a grin, "rest assured that when your uncle gets some completely random scrutiny then it will have nothing to do with you."

"I appreciate that gentlemen," Harry said gratefully, "and if there was a reward . . . well, I'm sure there are a number of charities that could use it better than I ever could."

"Sure about that lad? You look as if you could use a new set of clothes."

"One should never take a reward for doing one's duty," Harry said with a sigh, "that's the standard I hope to hold myself to anyway."

"Understood, have a good day lad."

"You too." Harry carefully lifted the box containing his new bird and began to carry it into the house.

"What's all that then?" Vernon demanded. He'd been home ten minutes and already had the smell of cheap gin on his breath.

"They were just dropping off my new bird Uncle Vernon," Harry replied.

"Not a chance," Vernon replied, "I'm not gonna have another bird stinking up my house."

"I . . ." Harry stared at the man. "I agree uncle."

"What?" Vernon stared at Harry in shock. "Then you're gonna get rid of that bloody thing?"

"Can't," Harry said with a false look of regret, "that would cause questions. We don't want another visit from the government again do we?"

"No," Vernon agreed reluctantly, "we don't."

"Why don't I pack up?" Harry asked. "It'll work out for you won't it? Me and the birds'll be gone and you can go back to your nice normal life." Harry didn't want to ignore Dumbledore's orders like that, but he couldn't allow Vernon to harm either of the animals. It was funny, Harry thought to himself, Alcohol was suppose to be able to turn a reasonable man into a killer. With Vernon, it just subtracted a half dozen points off his IQ and made him reasonable.

"Good thinking boy," Vernon said grudgingly, "how soon before you're gone?"

"Why don't you take the family out tonight?" Harry suggested. "I'll be gone before you get back."

"I wouldn't come back if I were you boy," Vernon slurred, "might not be too healthy."

"If I come back it won't be by choice," Harry said slowly, "and I'll be gone again as soon as I get a chance."

Harry walked up to his room and carefully placed the box down on his bed.

"Shhh, easy girl." Harry tried to sooth his newest pet. "Don't worry I'd never actually do anything to you. I just had to tell the bastard something to get him to calm down." He smiled when the bird settled down a bit. "Why don't I put you in Hedwig's cage?" Harry suggested. He turned to his owl. "It's just for a little while and I figured that you'd rather fly yourself to the Leaky Cauldron. We can get her her own cage tomorrow when the shops open."

"Prek," Hedwig agreed. She eyed the other bird for a few minutes before bobbing her head at the other girl.

"Here's the tricky part," Harry said to Hedwig. He reached into his trunk and pulled out a pair of dragonhide gloves. "Let's hope she doesn't savage me too badly huh girl?"

"Prek," Hedwig flew to the bed and glared into the box. "Prek."

"Letting her know I'm not a bad guy?" Harry laughed. "Thanks girl." He carefully transferred the bird to Hedwig's cage and was pleasantly surprised when she stayed calm. "There we go," he said as the bird made itself comfortable on the perch.

Harry took a couple more seconds to admire the bird before turning away. The bird watched intently as he took his shirt off and nearly fell off the perch when his pants followed. He stuck his head out his window to make sure that his 'family' was leaving and grabbed a towel, figuring that if he had the time he may as well get a quick shower to wash off the dirt from the garden before he left.

Hedwig waited until Harry was gone before staring at the cage and the new bird in it. She cocked her head at the newcomer.

"Cree," the new bird said innocently.

"Preyk," Hedwig challenged.

"Cree," the new bird admitted.

"Prek," Hedwig said with a satisfied bob of her head. It was about damned time, she was starting to worry that her Harry had something wrong with him.

Harry returned a few minutes later and immediately bent down to check his newest pet. After assuring himself that she hadn't distressed herself while he was gone, he turned away and bent over to get a clean set of clothing.

Hedwig watched in amusement as the new bird locked her eyes on Harry's behind. A long worm like tongue snaked out of the corner of her beak as she eyed her newest toy. She'd originally planned to identify herself as soon as she arrived, but this . . . this was much better.

Harry packed up his things and grabbed the box that his new pet came in to check for shipping labels or feeding instructions. After a few minutes of searching, he finally found the shipping manifest.

“French maybe?” He muttered to himself. “Markiss de Delacour, Château something?” He turned to the new bird. “Did Fleur send you my lovely.” The bird shook her head vigorously. “Gabrielle then?” This prompted an enthusiastic nod. “I’ll have to remember to thank her then.”

Harry gathered his things and dragged them to the curb and raised his wand to summon the Knight Bus. The bus pulled to the curb and Stan looked down at Harry and all his things with a skeptical look on his face.

“Problem?” Harry asked.

“Sorry gov,” Stan said quickly, “maybe s’not my place. But are ye sure ya wanna take the bus with all that?”

“What else could I take?”

“Could always hire a cab,” Stan replied.

“How do I do that?”

“Ah,” Stan nodded in understanding. “Muggle born then?”

“Raised as one.”

“S’ a simple thing ta remember,” Stan began, “hold your wand up for the bus and down for the cab. Jest hold it at waist hight and then tilt the tip down till the cab arrives.”

“Thanks Stan,” Harry said, “I appreciate the help.”

“Don’t worry bout it gov.” He closed the door and pulled the bus away from the curb.

Harry followed the instructions and was soon rewarded when an old black cab pulled to a stop.

"Where can I take you lad?" The cabby asked.

"Need to find a place to stay a few weeks," Harry said, "only place I know where I can do that is the Leaky Cauldron."

"How much you wanna spend lad?" The old cabbie asked. "I might have a few suggestions if you can tell me that."

"I only have about thirty Galleons on me," Harry said. He scratched his chin. "I suppose I could visit the bank later."

"Mah god yer Harry bleedin Potter?" The cabbie said in shock.

"Is that a problem?"

"No problem at all lad," the cabbie said quickly, "but I think I might have just the place for you."

"Where's that?" Harry belatedly realized that the man in front of him could easily betray him to Voldemort.

"Small but very exclusive hotel near Harrods," the cabbie said cheerfully, "sure the owner would be happy to rent you a room. It's not all that expensive either, jest a bit more then the Cauldron." He popped his trunk and got out to load Harry's things. "Magic keeps the expenses down and the price depends on who you are. Owner lost his son 'n brother in the last dust up," he explained, "Lucius Malfoy or one of them other bastards who bought their way outta prison couldn't afford a glass of water in the lobby. You on the other hand should get something closer to cost . . . lessen you agree with the Dark Wanker of course."

"Not even a little," Harry said with a grin.

"Then let's be on our way lad."

|||||||

Fleur was pondering the fate of her sister as she strolled through the family's vineyards. Where had the little minx run off to? It was a question that had prompted several several loud and unpleasant

conversations. The other question being asked was why did Gabrielle leave? Fleur had always thought that her sister was happy at home, why had the girl run away? She sighed, perhaps the girl had just wanted a grand adventure? Or perhaps there was some reason she thought she had to leave. The Delacour family was not a close family but a loving one despite that. There was one thing that Fleur knew for sure, heaven help anyone who harmed Gabrielle because there was no power on earth that could save them from the Delacour family.

|||||||

The owner himself came out to meet Harry when the cabbie brought Harry into the lobby and made a show of thanking the man and giving him a generous tip.

"Of course you'll stay here Harry," the man said with a smile, "you are a part owner after all."

"I am?" Harry asked in surprise.

"Your grandfather gave me the money to start this place," the owner explained, "always pretended he couldn't hear me when I tried to talk to him about making payments to clear the debt so I made the bastard my partner. That passed down to your father and from your father to you. Sides, your mother was a friend of my boy's when . . . before they got him."

"I was sorry to hear about your loss," Harry said carefully.

"It's been long enough to dull the pain," he sighed. "Sorry, forgot to introduce myself before. If things had been different then my boy would be running this place and I'd be fat and happy spoiling you an my grandkids. Name's James Smith, call me Jim."

"Shame that didn't happen," Harry said wistfully, "I'd have liked to have had a family."

"Still have my daughter," the man said brightly, "her first should be at Hogwarts in a year."

"Give me a name and I'll keep an eye on 'em," Harry promised.

"I'll do just that," Jim agreed. "Sally, I want you to get Harry the best suite we have."

"Yes Mr. Smith," the girl behind the desk agreed.

"And make sure he gets whatever he wants," Jim continued, "you have any worries about your safety Harry?" Harry thought back over his years of schooling.

"A couple," he admitted.

"Mind if I call in a favor or two? I might be able to think of something to help with that."

"Go ahead," Harry said.

"Then I'll see you tomorrow Harry," he said with a happy grin, "make sure he gets something to eat Sally."

"Yes sir," she agreed. He left and she regarded Harry with a look of expectation. "What can I do for you Mr. Potter?"

"First of all, could you call me Harry?"

"I think I could," she agreed with a grin, "anything else?"

"I'm gonna need something to feed to my birds," Harry began, "something warm for myself would be nice too if that isn't too much trouble."

"Of course," she agreed. The woman snapped her hands. "Tinkle."

"You called Tinkle?" A house elf dressed in a bell hop's uniform asked.

"Please take Mr. Potter's bags up to his suite," she said.

"Tinkle will do," the elf agreed. In a flash, it disappeared with Harry's bags.

IIIIIIII



Dumbledore walked into his office and made his usual check of the devices he had to monitor Harry's well being. After all, what was the loss of a bit of privacy when compared to the needs of security? There was no doubt in Albus's mind that Harry would be angry if he ever found out just how closely he was monitored, but let the boy throw a tantrum . . . let him throw a hundred. If he was too much of a child to recognize how necessary a close guard was then he was not enough of an adult to manage his own affairs. His eyes stopped on one of the machines, unlike the surrounding machines it stood stock still.

"It appears that Harry needs to be found," Dumbledore mused, "found and retrieved." With a long suffering sigh, Dumbledore gathered his things and summoned the Order. They had a child to find and they wouldn't rest until he was back in the safety of his crib.

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Harry stared in shock at the spread of food that had been laid out for him in his suite. He'd been away from the Dursley family for less than a day and here was yet another reason that he'd never miss them.

"I'm supposed to eat all this?" He mumbled in shock.

"Sharkie thinks young master is too thin," the tinny voice of a house elf replied from beneath the table.

"I didn't have much opportunity to eat much when I was at . . . the place I lived," Harry tried to defend himself, "it's not like I had a choice."

"Sharky thinks young master needs to learn to take care of himself," the house elf said reproachfully, "and that young master must clear whole table."

"I don't think I can eat that much," Harry protested.

"Sharky doesn't think young master has a choice."

|||||

Jim Smith was waiting at the service entrance when several rough looking men arrived with their hats in their hands. Waving them in, he led them to his office and seated them with a smile.

"Heard you might have a bit of work for us Mr. Smith?" One of them asked hopefully. "Involving magic."

"How are the wife and kids Frank?" Jim asked, ignoring the man's question. "Your oldest should be getting his letter soon."

"Should be," Frank agreed, "the misus and I aren't sure if . . ."

"Aren't sure if you should let him go right?" Jim asked. "What would be the point after all? He'd just be setting himself up for a disappointment."

"I never held it against them you know," Frank replied, "the war was over so what use was a bunch of extra Aurors? Only natural they'd let a few go isn't it?"

"And the fact that you couldn't find another job?"

"Was due to everyone having a cousin in the same boat," Frank continued, "can't hold taking care of their family against someone can you?" His hands tightened on the brim of his hat. "I'm not worried that my boy won't get opportunities in the magical world, I know he won't. Not enough jobs to go to family half the time, outsiders are out of luck. I'm worried that he won't be able to adjust back to his own world."

"That's the rub isn't it?" Jim asked. "Our economy consists of a bunch of fools passing around the same gold and calling it profit. No room for growth . . . bugger it. I didn't ask you gentlemen down here to talk about our problems, I asked you here to do a job. Do any of you have anything you can't leave for a few weeks? Maybe a couple of months?"

"I mostly do day jobs when I can find 'em," Frank spoke for the group, "live off the dole the rest of the time. The rest of this lot is the same."

"You finished fourth in your class?" Jim exclaimed in surprise. "You were an Auror for gods sake."

"And I never got any credentials that count for anything in the real world," Frank said calmly, "never had the money or the time."

"Well . . . this makes things easier for me anyway," Jim said with false cheer, "I need to upgrade my security while playing host to a very important guest. The Dark Bastard is back and my guest is number one on the hit list."

"Who?"

"Lily's boy."

"We're in."

IIIIIIII

Under the watchful eye of what he had dubbed the 'house-elf-from-hell,' Harry had managed to put away most of the massive feast that had been prepared in honor of his arrival.

"I can't eat another bite," Harry protested.

"Young master must eat more," the house elf demanded, "must clean his plate." The house elf glared at the uneaten portions. "There is children in bad places who would eat young master's food, wasting is bad."

"I . . ." Harry was saved from having to think up a response by a knock on the door. "Have someone at the door."

"Is Mister Jim," the house elf said. With a snap of the fingers, the door opened. "Why is Mister Jim interrupting young master's meal?"

"Just wanted to introduce my head of security," Jim said smoothly. "I understand that you saw the bastard with no name get reborn?"

"Yes sir," Harry agreed.

"Ain't that a bitch," Frank growled, "looks like one go round wasn't enough. You know how many followers he has?"

"I'm not sure," Harry said, "twenty or thirty I think."

"Wouldn't happen to know who they are?" The ex-Auror asked hopefully.

"I could make a list," Harry offered.

"Do that lad," he agreed, "and thank you." He turned to stare at Harry's newest pet. "You were aware that your bird was a girl?"

"I thought so," Harry said with a grin, "based on the size and the plumage. You wouldn't happen to know what she is would you?"

"No," Frank replied, "I mean she really is a girl. She's not a bird."

"What?" Harry made a frantic grab for his wand as the disgruntled bird hopped to the ground and transformed into a young girl.

"Zut," she cursed, "it is me my 'arrie."

"Gabrielle?" Harry asked in shock.

"You know her?" Frank asked calmly.

"Yeah," Harry agreed, "she's . . ."

"I am 'arrie's betrothed," Gabrielle interrupted.

"What?" Frank asked in shock.

"What?" Harry echoed.

"Betrothed," Gabrielle said slowly, "it is . . . we are to be married. Um, engaged . . ."

"I know what betrothed means," Harry said in frustration, "when did we . . ."

"Are you saying are time by the lake meant nothing to you?" Gabrielle demanded. "I thought you were a better man then that my 'arrie."

"But you're so young," Harry protested, "it wouldn't be . . ."

"I am only about two years younger than you my 'arrie," Gabrielle interrupted with a dazzling smile. Closer to three but she saw no need to go into details. "And I am a bit small for my age."

"I . . . what about your schooling?" Harry said frantically. He was too young to be engaged.

"I shall come to 'ogwarts to be with you of course," she said with a dismissive way, "we shall not be parted."

"I . . ." Harry shot a pleading look at the other two men in the room.

"Yer on yer own kid," Frank said quickly.

"Lily always did want a lot of grandchildren," Jim mused.

"Then it is settled," Gabrielle said with a happy smile, "I am yours my 'arrie."

IIIIIIIIII

"You're sure he's here?" Moody asked calmly.

"That's what the tracking charms tell me," Albus said with a smile. "Let's go retrieve the wayward child."

"Yer either getting soft or senile," Moody growled, "take a look around."

"I fail to see . . . oh."

"Bastards have us boxed in," Moody said admiringly, "good to see they haven't forgotten what I drilled into their thick bloody skulls."

"They aren't hostile then?"

"I'd wager that depends on us," Moody said thoughtfully, "but if you're asking if they're Death Eaters? I'd say the answer to that is a resounding no, muggle born, all of 'em."

"Pete is a half blood," one of the men said with a grin, "what was it you were always telling us? I'm sure I'd love to remind you. Hmm . . . constant something?"

"Complacency," Moody said sourly, "least one of us remembered. Can't believe I stumbled into this."

"You're getting old," the man said, "and rusty."

"So it seems," Moody agreed.

"As good as it is for old friends to catch up," Dumbledore interjected, "we're here on serious business."

"Oh?"

"Hoping to have a word with Harry Potter," Dumbledore said smoothly, "he's run away from home and his aunt is beside herself with worry."

"You with him mad eye?"

"For the moment," Moody said reluctantly.

"Suppose I can get you a word then," he said, "for old times sake."

Dumbledore and Moody followed the strange man into the hotel and up a short flight of stairs to suite of rooms that Harry had hired.

"I'm very disappointed in you Harry," Dumbledore said with a frown, "running away from home like that. Why, your aunt is beside herself with worry."

"That's not Dumbledore," Harry warned. In a flash, every wand in the room was trained on the Headmaster.

"My dear boy . . ." Albus was taken aback by the accusation. "I assure you that . . ."

"My aunt can't stand me," Harry growled, "you shouldn't have tried that."

"If he moves," Frank said in a low voice, "kill him."

"Why don't we all jes take a moment," Moody sighed, "don't want to do anything we might regret later. Now then, what do we have to do to prove our identities?"

"What color were my wife's panties?" Frank demanded.

"Green," Moody said immediately, "and a more horrific sight I've never seen."

"I told you," Frank said in exasperation, "I was only wearing them cause I lost a bet."

"Yeah," Moody agreed, "you told me that . . . dinna believe it."

"That's Moody," Frank said with a grin, "good to see you again you old bastard."

"Wish it was under different circumstances," Moody said with a nod, "don suppose yewd take ma word fer it that this is Albus Dumbledore?"

"Would you if you were me?"

"Not a bloody chance," Moody said honestly. "Would ya trust yer charms?"

"For now," Frank agreed.

"Albus," Moody said, "he's gonna hit you with a spell or two. Wouldna move if I were you."

"Is this really necessary?" Dumbledore asked with a long suffering sigh.

"Vitally," Frank snapped.

"Very well," Dumbledore agreed, "you may do as you wish." He bore it stoically as several of the men hit him with a variety of spells.

"Looks like it is him," Frank said grudgingly, "anyone got anything different?" The other men signaled that they hadn't. "Well then, say your piece."

“Harry,” Dumbledore said in a grandfatherly tone, “you must come with us back to your family. You must know that it's for your own good.”

“My 'arrie will not be going back to those disgusting . . . things,” Gabrielle said firmly, “they are scum and 'e is much too good to be soiled by their presence.” The annoyed look that Dumbledore shot her seemed to bounce off the young girl.

“What do you have to say Harry?” Dumbledore asked.

“I think you've lied to me at least once since you got here.” Harry had managed to regain his center thanks to the time provided by Gabrielle's pronouncement. “I think that you are not my guardian, and I think that I'm never going back to that place.”

“Bravo 'arrie,” Gabrielle squealed, “très masculine.”

“Was there anything else sir?” Harry asked.

“We'll talk again later,” Dumbledore said calmly, “perhaps you'll be more reasonable then.” He turned and began walking towards the door.

“One moment,” Gabrielle said, “I wish to have a word with you.”

“What is it?” Dumbledore asked.

“I wish to transfer to 'ogwarts,” Gabrielle said happily, “to be with my 'arrie.”

“I'm not sure that will be possible,” Dumbledore said reluctantly.

“Sir, if this is because . . .”

“It has nothing to do with you Harry,” Dumbledore said quickly.

“Then . . . why?”

“I'm afraid that . . .” Dumbledore sighed. “May I have a seat?”

“Go ahead sir,” Harry agreed.



"First of all," Dumbledore began as he took his seat, "I don't have the amount of control over the school that most people seem to think I have. Tell me Harry, how many of your classmates are not fully human?"

"I don't know sir."

"None of them at the moment," Dumbledore said with a frown, "the board of Governors was quite insistent on that point and I do not have the influence to overrule them. The thing you have to understand about politics is that it's a game of compromises, I've had to compromise my ethics on some things in order to gain concessions on other things."

"So I am not able to go to 'ogwarts because I am part veela?" An outraged Gabrielle demanded.

"I'm afraid so," Dumbledore agreed. "For what it's worth, I am sorry that things have to be this way."

"You said politics are about compromise?" Harry asked suddenly.

"Yes," Dumbledore agreed.

"What if I were willing to go back to the Dursleys?" Harry asked. "Then would you let Gabrielle go to Hogwarts?"

"Then I would be overjoyed," Dumbledore said honestly, "I really think that it's the safest place for you. But alas, I would not be able to ensure that Ms. Delacour would be admitted. I would try of course, will try I should say. But I do not believe that I will be able to persuade to board to come to my point of view."

"I'm glad to hear that sir," Harry said.

"But?" Dumbledore lost his composure. "In god's name why?"

"Because if you had agreed then that would have shown that you were lying. I'm glad to see that you're being honest with me."

"Not necessarily," Dumbledore corrected, "I may have had some capitol that I'd been saving."

"It shows that you're decent then," Harry corrected himself, "if you had the leverage to admit students with nonhuman blood and didn't use it . . ."

"Yes I see," Dumbledore said in understanding, "and you are correct. If I had any way to allow more students to experience the joy that is Hogwarts, then I would have used it."

"If I am not allowed to be a student at 'ogwarts then I shall go as my 'arrie's pet," Gabrielle said firmly.

"Unusual," Dumbledore said with a twinkle in his eye, "but I think the rules will allow it and I doubt the Board will have any cause to object to a student bring a pet to class with him . . . or of having a friend in a younger year bring his pet with them."

"If I were to agree to go back to the Dursleys," Harry said slowly, "how long would I have to go?"

"Two weeks should do it," Dumbledore said slowly, "but only if you stayed in the house the entire time."

"And what would you be willing to concede if I agreed?" Harry grinned at the unintentional rhyme.

"What do you want?"

"I want training," Harry said, "for me and my friends."

"Agreed," Dumbledore said, "what else?"

"A private room for 'arrie and myself," Gabrielle said firmly.

"That can be arranged," Dumbledore said with a nod, "what else?"

"One more thing," Harry said firmly, "I want you to spend two weeks at the Dursley house polyjuiced to look like me. If you can take two

weeks with them then I suppose I can, if you can't then I still get what we agreed to but I don't have to go back . . . ever."

"Did your Doppelgänger leave us enough potion to carry out Harry's request Alastor?" Dumbledore asked reluctantly.

"Enough for double that," Moody agreed, "and another month if ya wanna look as handsome as I do."

"Why don't we mark that down as an alternate plan?" Dumbledore suggested. "Is that satisfactory Harry?"

"Yes sir," Harry agreed.

"Then I have an additional demand of my own," Dumbledore said, "Gabrielle."

"Yes?"

"Do your parents know where you are right now?" He laughed when she winced at the question. "Write your parents and tell them where you are and all that has happened. That is my demand, agree to that and we have a deal."

"Agreed," Gabrielle said with an unhappy frown.

"Harry?"

"Deal."

"Then if you will excuse me," Dumbledore said as he rose to his feet, "I must be going. Is there anything I need to know about your relatives Harry?"

"Do you know how to cook?" Harry asked.

"No," Dumbledore said, "why?"

"You'd better learn quick then," Harry said, "and how to clean, garden, mow the lawn . . . I'm sure you'll figure it out."

"Yes, well . . ."

"And no magic," Harry said firmly, "you want the real Harry Potter experience don't you?"

"I never agreed not to use magic," Dumbledore said with a smile. He raised his hand to stem the coming protest. "But I don't believe that it is an unreasonable request, I agree."

"Have fun sir," Harry said with a feral smile.

"Come Alastor." Dumbledore swept out of the room. "We have work to do."

"And you have a letter to write," Harry said to his newest 'pet.'

"Must I?" Gabrielle asked, she pouted cutely.

"It's what we agreed," Harry said.

"Fine," Gabrielle agreed, "may I 'ave some parchment and a quill?" She asked the hotel's owner.

"Sure can," Jim agreed, "Squicky."

"Here is things for birdy girl," the house elf squeaked.

"There you go," Jim said, "just send it down to the front desk and we'll have it posted for you."

"Thank you," Gabrielle said with a dazzling smile.

"Where do you need it to go to?"

"To my father, the Marquis de Delacour at the Château de Chênaie."

"You're French?" Jim asked in shock. "Your English is wonderful."

"I 'ave a bit of 'elp with my English," Gabrielle admitted. She pulled a small locket out of her shirt. "It allows me to speak the language of my intended."

"Useful bit of magic," Jim said with a nod of approval, "glad to see you've good sense enough to find a way to communicate."

"Thank you," Gabrielle said, "I am done."

"That's it?" Harry asked in surprise.

"Just a short note appraising them of what 'as 'appened," Gabrielle explained, "it need not be over long."

"I'll be sure it goes out right away," Jim promised, "Skummie ."

"You is calling Skummie?" A disreputable looking house elf demanded.

"Be sure that the other bedroom in this suite is prepared for Ms. Delacour," Jim ordered.

"Skummie will do that," he agreed.

"Separate rooms?" Gabrielle asked in dismay.

"I'm afraid that Harry is a teenaged boy," Jim said regretfully, "and as such he cannot be trusted around a beautiful young girl such as yourself."

"But of course," Gabrielle said happily, "my 'arrie is such a vigorous man that 'e would try to visit me in the night."

"And that's why I'm going to have to ask Frank to have a couple men posted here all night," Jim continued, "both to protect your virtue and to protect you both from potential assassins." He managed to hide his grin at Harry's sigh of relief and Gabrielle's sniff of annoyance.

IIIIIIIIII

Dumbledore and Moody appeared on the street in front of the Dursley house with a soft pop of displaced air. With a look of disgust on his face, Dumbledore downed the polyjuice potion and walked up to the front door. The Headmaster knocked on the door and waited until the door opened.

"Boy?" Vernon asked in shock. "Thought you said you weren't coming back?"

"Things change," Albus said as the door slammed. "Perhaps I should try that again?" He mused. The Headmaster pounded on the door again until it jerked open.

"What?" Vernon demanded. "Why are you still here?"

"Aren't you going to let me in?"

"No," Vernon shouted and Albus was once again faced with a rapidly closing door.

"Perhaps that's why Harry doesn't want to return?" Dumbledore speculated. "A most unpleasant fellow, I am sure that Petunia will be most put out to learn how he is treating her nephew." He pounded on the door again, this time adding a mild compulsion charm to insure that Petunia would be the one to answer the door. After all, he'd only agreed not to use magic while living at the Dursley house. Using magic to insure that he got the chance to live in the Dursley house violated neither the letter nor the spirit of his agreement.

"You?" Petunia said in disgust. "I thought we'd seen the last of you."

"Happily," Dumbledore said with a twinkle in Harry's eye, "you were wrong."

"Happily?" Petunia demanded. "The happiest day of my life was the day I thought you were gone for good."

"Aren't you going to invite me in?"

"Not on your life," Petunia growled, "leave and never come back."

"I . . ." Dumbledore managed to say before the door slammed.

"Problem?" Moody asked.

"A minor setback," Dumbledore replied, "nothing a bit of magic can't deal with."

"Thought you said you weren't going to use any magic?"

"Not after I get in," Dumbledore explained, "it's fine to do before."

"I see."

"Now if you please wait out of sight," Dumbledore said airily, "I am afraid that your presence may alarm Harry's family."

"I'll just be right over there then," Moody said. Watching, laughing, and taking pictures. He thought to himself. "Alright?"

"Yes fine," Dumbledore agreed. It took another two hours of knocking and spell work, but Dumbledore eventually managed to wrangle an invitation to enter the Dursley home.

"Get to work on the dishes boy," Petunia screeched.

"Might I get something to eat first?" Albus asked hopefully. "I haven't had a chance to get dinner."

"Not my problem boy," Petunia growled, "dinner was an hour ago and you weren't here."

"Actually I was," Dumbledore corrected her, "you just wouldn't let me in."

"Don't give me any back talk boy," Petunia said, "now get to work. You know the rules, if you don't work then you don't eat."

"But I didn't eat," Dumbledore said reasonably, "so logic dictates that I shouldn't have to work."

"Shut up boy." Petunia slapped him on the back of the head. "And clean those bloody dishes. The freaks may make us keep you but by god I'll make sure you don't enjoy it."

"It's for the greater good," Dumbledore said to himself, "the greater good."

IIIIIIIIII

Moody was more than a bit amused as he watched his old friend attempt to deal with a house full of 'the worst sort of muggles' as

Minerva would say. He couldn't remember the last time he'd had so much fun at the expense of another person.

"BUGGER THE GREATER GOOD," Harry's voice echoed through the neighborhood, "AND BUGGER YOU BLOODY GITS."

Moody watched with a smile as Dumbledore paid the Dursleys back for the fifteen minutes of hell that he'd spent with them. Albus stormed out of the house at number four a few minutes later with a look of disgust on his face.

"Decided to call things off early did you?" Moody asked calmly.

"Harry must be a bloody saint to have dealt with those people for so long without putting them six feet under," Dumbledore replied, "how could anyone be so . . . so . . ."

"Dursleyish?"

"Give them up to Amelia Bones with my suggestion that she investigate them for child abuse," Dumbledore said sharply, "and if by some miracle she doesn't find any evidence that they mistreated Harry . . ."

"Best you stop there," Moody said calmly, "and let me deal with the details."

"Bugger that fer a bag ah doughnuts," Dumbledore snapped, "if we're going to do some evil to those bastards then I want in on it."

IIIIIIIIII

Harry woke up late the next morning to the sight of a dangerous looking bird glaring down at him from its perch on the headboard.

"Got a letter for me?" Harry asked sleepily. In reply, the bird dumped an envelope sealed with wax before flying out the window. "Could have sworn I closed that last night," Harry muttered to himself.

He broke the wax seal on the envelope and began reading the letter. Harry's eyebrows shot up and a grin formed on his face as he



realized what he was reading. Giddy at the prospect of being able to solve one of his problems, Harry threw his clothes on and tore out of the room on his way to the Leaky Cauldron.

|||||

Albus and Moody were hiding in the bushes across from the Dursley residence waiting in anticipation for their plan to come to fruition.

“And you're sure this is going to work?” Moody asked. “Doesn't seem like it's a bit . . . petty and ineffective to you?”

“Do I have to explain how it works again?” Albus asked in exasperation.

“Why don't you?” Moody agreed.

“Ok, we ordered a bunch of food to be delivered right?”

“Yeah?”

“And so when it arrives.” Albus began giggling. “Here it is, just watch.”

They watched as the delivery man knocked on the door, they watched as Dudley answered, and they watched as Dudley squealed in joy rather than in rage as Dumbledore's plan had called for. Dudley opened the door and tossed several empty boxes to the curb a few minutes later, giving a satisfied belch before he closed the door.

“Well?” Moody said. “I'm still not sure what was supposed to happen.”

“Curses.”

“Why don't we just agree that I should take things from here?” Moody suggested.

“No,” Dumbledore growled, “I have not yet begun to fight.”

“Fine,” Moody sighed, “we can do it your way again.”

|||||

Fleur stormed into the leaky cauldron ahead of her parents, ready to give Harry Potter a piece of her mind for the way he was treating her innocent younger sister. Imagine treating a Delacour in such a fashion? The very thought of it was enough send her into a blind rage.

The look of hope in Harry's eyes when he saw her and the way he immediately made a bee line towards her across the room gave her pause. The cute way he bit his lower lip and wrung his hands convinced her to hear him out.

"Fleur, I'm so glad you're here."

"Eez there something you 'ould like to speak with me about 'arrie?"

"It's Gabrielle," Harry agreed.

"What is wrong with Gabrielle?" Fleur demanded.

"Nothing," Harry said quickly, "but she's decided to come to Hogwarts with me as my pet."

"Yes," Fleur agreed coldly, "I 'ave 'eard about that."

"It's the only way the Board of Governors will let her go," Harry sighed, "I tried to get her to go back to Beauxbatons to finish her education but she just pouted and asked when I'd decided that I didn't want her anymore."

"And of course you broke and apologized didn't you 'arrie?" Fleur laughed. "Gabrielle learned that trick when she was four years old." Actually, Fleur herself had taught Gabrielle that trick when she was four years old but there was no need to admit that. "Take me to my sister 'arrie."

"One more question," Harry said slowly.

"Yes 'arrie?" She asked with an expectant look on her face.

"Is there really a Veela mating bond?"

"We shall discuss these things later 'arrie," Fleur replied, "now let us go to my sister."

"I'll hail a cab," Harry said as he led her out the door into London, "what about the Veela mating urge? Will she really die if I don't kiss her within the next couple months?"

"Be patient 'arrie," Fleur laughed, "and if you need a taxi then we 'ad better wait a few moments for my parents."

AN: The reason Hedwig no longer hoots is because of a fic by Meteoricshipyards that mentioned that Snowy Owls bark rather than hoot. Well a bit of research confirmed that and now I'm annoyed at myself for not doing my research. Title by ibinnotty.

Omake: Back at Hogwarts

"So you want to have sex with one of my pets?" Harry asked with a smirk. "Why don't you just use one of the school owls? I'm not letting you lay a finger on Hedwig."

"The school owls are not for relieving the sexual frustration of the students," Minerva interjected. "Mr. Malfoy is going to have to buy his own owl."

"Sorry Draco," Harry said with apparent sympathy. "Them's the breaks, I'm sure your father will get you an owl to explore your new desires with . . . well, unless he's squandered the Malfoy family fortune on bribing Minister Fudge."

"I don't want to have sex with a school owl," Draco finally managed to shout.

"Just Hedwig huh?" Harry asked with a frown.

"Prek?" The owl in question asked in horror.

"Don't worry girl," Harry soothed the owl. "I won't let him slake his dark lusts on your innocent body."

"Gawh," Hedwig sighed.

"Not her," Draco screamed. "Her." Pointing in the direction of Gabrielle who to the private amusement of many had assumed her avian form. "I mean . . ."

"You can't have sex with any of my birds," Harry said quickly causing some to groan at the pun. "Sick bastard. What's next, you gonna go after Hermione's little kitty? Hagrid's monster?"

"I'm afraid I'm going to have to rule that Mr. Malfoy can not have sex with any of the animals at Hogwarts that do not belong to him," Dumbledore ruled to the relief of several owls, one toad, a few cats, and some of the unspeakable horrors at Hagrid's hut.

Omake by Brian Arcis

Draco had been trying to send a letter to his father for a week now. Ever since Potter had humiliated him in front of the entire school and now he needed advice from his father. the only problem was none of the owls would come anywhere near him.

"Father will know what to do. I'll get back at Potter and get his little pet!"

Draco's mutterings were heard by all of the owls in the owlery. They had all heard what the little pervert wanted and it seemed even the ancient one's ruling would be ignored. They should have seen this coming they all knew that one of the hippogryphs(sp?) had attacked the freak a few years ago.

They had all just assumed it was the blonde one being an arrogant ass but maybe Buckbeak had only been fending off unwanted sexual advances?

Omake by davidiusbrown

"Malfoy, just because your mother was paraded around like the roast beef and served up to everyone does not mean you get to inflict yourself upon Gabrielle. Go away or die."

Omake by neil.reynolds

"I can't understand it, Hermione/Ginny/Luna/Fleur. Every night after I take my bath and get into bed, my new bird starts making these odd soft noises while preening herself and shifting restlessly on her perch; until she lets off a loud squawk."

"Really?" She stared at the avian Gabrielle, her eyes narrowing.

Harry continued, "Usually it happens just once. Occasionally it happens two or three times in a row. But the first time I kept getting up to see if I could help her, she did it five times in a row, whenever I left her alone and got back in bed."

"What were you wearing that night you kept getting out of bed to look after her?"

"Um. just boxers. I was just dressed for bed, you know."

"I see. I'm pretty sure that having seen you willing to leave your warm bed while practically unclothed, just to look after her, was a great help to her. She might not have managed five times without it."

"What?"

"Oh, nothing."

Disclaimer: Luna is fun to write.

### Catch You on the Flip Side

It wasn't surprising that the Defense Professor made an attempt to murder Harry Potter; after all, it was the rare DADA Professor that didn't try at least once. What was surprising was the fact that he made his attempt in the Great Hall on the second day of classes and of course the fact that it looked like he was going to succeed.

"Harry no," Luna screamed. Everyone in the Great Hall watched as Luna attempted to tackle her friend out of the way of the dark curse speeding towards him.

"No," Hermione gasped. The other girl had managed to get to Harry, moving so fast it was practically apparition, just as the curse hit, striking them both. "No." Harry and Luna were surrounded by the curse's sick yellow glow for a few seconds then it stopped and the two students began fading away. "Professor, do something," she screamed.

At the Head Table, most of the Professors were busy subduing their colleague. The enthusiasm they showed made their view that no matter what the Headmaster might believe, the faculty did not think that attempts to kill the students should be tolerated. That meant the Headmaster was the only person with ability and opportunity to save Harry and Luna.

Snape's contribution, a boot to the groin, was both surprisingly effective and well... just a surprise really. Most of the students and staff later wrote it off as Snape being vindictive over someone killing off the sole remaining Potter, before he got a chance to torment him into insanity.

Dumbledore's wand danced as he attempted to perform a broad range counter curse. He'd been too slow to block the attack but he vowed that he would be damned if he let two of his students die before the rest. Really, it was quite annoying. Each of his students had a scheduled time and place they were supposed to end their mortal existence and Dumbledore was not going to allow anyone to

cut in line. Faster and faster his hands moved as he fought a losing battle until finally, the two children disappeared completely.

"Albus?" Minerva asked.

"I've failed," Dumbledore said in horror, thinking of the massive rewrite he'd have to do to his schedule now.

"No wait," Minerva said, "look." The glow had returned and everyone could see two large figures forming. "They're back, they're . . . naked?" The two figures on the floor bore only a vague resemblance to the two children they'd replaced, they looked larger, looked older, looked like they weren't going to stop shagging any time soon.

"Ride me like a pony," the older Luna lookalike screamed, "give it to me harder ahhhhhhhhhh. " The two new figures changed positions three times before a rather vocal finally.

Most of those present claimed it was shock that prevented them from interrupting, but both the Claws and the Puffs walked away with four full pages of notes, while several Snakes and Griffins managed to capture it on film to share with their housemates.

"Are you two quite finished?" Dumbledore asked with a twinkle in his eye.

"Not quite," the older Luna lookalike replied, "why do you ask?"

"I am Albus Dumbledore, the Headmaster of this school. And you are?"

"Luna Potter," she said proudly, "and this is my Husband Harry. We're on our honeymoon and I thought you were dead?"

"That's it, I'm out of here," Snape muttered and quickly fled the scene, not even taking the time to perform his classic robe swish that was his trademark.

"I assure you that I am quite alive," Dumbledore replied, "did you two perhaps go into another dimension for several years before finding comfort in each other's arms?"

"I think perhaps we got caught in a magical accident and swapped places with a couple of our younger analogs in another dimension," Luna mused, "at least that's what it looks like . . . ready for round four Harry?"

"You know it love," Harry agreed, having been stared at enough his entire life that crowds no longer affected him at all, regardless of what he was doing. Several dozen pairs of eyes rounded as the young couple pulled each other close to begin another round of practical sex education.

"Stop that at once," Minerva demanded.

"Why?" Luna sighed.

"I realize that you two are on your honeymoon," Minerva said sympathetically, "but this is not the time or place for such activity."

"I just assumed that since you summoned us here," Harry began.

"We did not summon you two here," Minerva snapped.

"Good to know," Harry mused, "now where were we?"

"You were groping me while I licked your jaw line," Luna explained.

Right," Harry agreed with a lecherous grin, "back to groping."

"Do not go back to groping," Minerva screamed.

"What now?" Harry demanded. "You're really interrupting our personal time here."

"It seems that you've swapped places with two of our students," Dumbledore said happily, "two of your younger selves. Could you tell us where they might have gone?"

"Probably back to our apartment in Monaco," Harry replied, "now if there are no other questions . . ." Without bothering to wait for a reply, Harry's hands and mouth resumed their, apparently stellar, job.

"Ooooh," Luna squealed, "that's the spot and that one too!"



"I'm afraid that there are several more questions," Dumbledore said quickly.

"Damn it, what now," Harry complained; sure it was nice that his old headmaster was alive again, but that was no excuse for interrupting his and Luna's fun time.

"Could we perhaps, take this conversation to my office?"

"We never did get a chance to shag on the Headmaster's desk," Luna said with a coy smile.

"And that's why I love you," Harry said with a grin, "alright we agree. We'll go to your office and shag on your desk."

"I was hoping that perhaps . . ."

"I don't mind if you watch," Luna said with a nod, "it would be rude to kick you out of your office."

"That's not . . . I don't want to watch."

"Well then you're out of luck," Luna said with a frown, "because you can't join."

"I . . . Minerva help."

"OK, she can join, but only for the first half hour, and we'll need Hogwarts' robes for the role play," Harry stated, as Luna squealed.

"Put some clothes on both of you," Minerva demanded.

"I thought we were going to wait until we were in the headmaster's office? Not that I have a problem with doing a little play for the kiddies of course," Harry shrugged.

"No, I mean put on some normal clothes."

"Why?"

"Because it is not appropriate to go around naked like that."

"As a couple on our honeymoon, it is very appropriate. "

"You're around school children."

"And," Harry asked, wondering what exactly her point was. The entire school had faced death from various sources while he was attending it and she was getting upset over a little sex? It's that damn, PBS telethon all over again and I still say we should have won the talent round, god knows they got more donations in the five minutes we were on then their entire last five years combined.'

|||||

Harry and Luna awoke in a large richly furnished apartment. The walls were covered with portraits that would not have been out of place in an 18th century gentleman's club along with several pictures of what appeared to be older versions of themselves engaged in a number of pornographic poses.

"Are you okay Harry?" Luna asked in concern. Her hands roamed over his body... in search of injuries. Excellent excuse, if I do say so myself.'

"I . . . I think so," Harry tensed as one of Luna's hands ventured into his robe.

"Good," Luna said in relief, pulling her hand back out, as apparently it'd had the opposite effect of what she'd been shooting for. "now you do me."

"Do what," Harry asked, eyes wide, even as his hands had already started forward without further input from his brain.

"Check me for injuries," Luna replied, "be sure to pay special attention to my breasts."

|||||

Dumbledore led the odd couple to his office and seated them in a pair of chairs facing his desk.

"Are you sure you don't want any robes then?" He asked hopefully.

"Maybe later," Harry replied.

"They'd just get in the way now," Luna agreed.

"Yes . . . well." The Headmaster coughed. "Have you given any thought to how you're going to pass the time while we try to find a way to get you home?"

"I just figured that we'd continue our honeymoon," Harry mused.

"Five years really isn't long enough," Luna agreed.

"You two have been married for five years?" Dumbledore asked in shock. "And you're still having your honeymoon?"

"Yep."

"Why?"

"Yes . . . well . . . how are you managing to pay for it all?"

Dumbledore tried another tack. "Your bank accounts are back in your world after all."

"All I need is to find a couple coins on the street," Harry replied, "that and a slot machine. I'll build up to the roulette tables from there."

"You're a gambler?"

"Don't even need to cheat," Harry agreed, "with luck like mine you don't need to."

"How else do you think a school boy was going to defeat a Dark Lord without any training?" Luna demanded.

"I'd assumed that love would . . ."

"Nope," Luna interrupted, "bad guy got struck by a meteor."

"So did his followers," Harry added, "strangest thing. There I was, beaten and bleeding on the ground."

"Along with everyone else," Luna giggled, "they had us by the balls . . . or rather they had half of us by the balls. They had me by the throat I suppose, or maybe by Harry's balls."

"Well you always were attached to them love. So there we were," Harry picked up, "completely screwed when what should appear but a swarm of meteor-z."

"Killed all the Death Eaters."

"And we all went out for punch and pie."

"I actually went for sausage while Harry went for pie," Luna whispered to Dumbledore.

"And that's what we've been doing ever since," Harry finished with a grin.

"Rather than doing that again," Dumbledore said, "would you be willing to become our Defense Against Dark Arts Professors?"

"Defense Professors?" Harry asked in shock.

"Our last Professor was killed while resisting arrest," Dumbledore explained. He tried very hard not to shudder as he remembered the smug look on Minerva's face when she shared that bit of news with him. "You are stuck here until we find a way to get you back home and retrieve our missing students."

"You're offering us the job without knowing our qualifications? "

"You can't be any less qualified than our last few Professors," Dumbledore said quickly, "and there's also the fact that I doubt either of you is planning to kill Harry Potter . . . are you?"

"I've considered it," Luna admitted.

"Dear?"

"You leave the toilet seat down," Luna confessed, "it's really annoying."

"Sorry, I thought you'd like it that way." Harry said in remorse. "I'll stop doing that right away."

"Oh Harry take me now," Luna squealed.

Dumbledore showed he had a slight touch of seer's blood, or possibly common sense, and managed to save his dish of lemon candy, before the two managed to destroy everything on his desk in their passion.

IIIIIIIIII

After giving Luna a thorough examination, she'd demanded he redo part of it, just to be safe, Harry decided to investigate the strange place they'd found themselves.

"Look at this," Luna squealed. "Look how flexible I'm going to get."

"Where are we?" Harry said in wonder.

"I suspect that we're in the future," Luna replied, "a future where the two of us are happily married."

"And flexible," Harry said in wonder at the actions in one of the photos.

"That too," Luna agreed, slipping an arm around his waist.

IIIIIIIIII

Harry and Luna were on their way to the quarters that they'd been assigned after accepting Dumbledore's job offer. 'It'll be novel to have a competent Professor,' Harry had laughed, when they were stopped by one of their new students.

"What can we do for you Hermione?" Harry asked.

"Um . . . could I have a word with Luna?" Hermione asked nervously, trying in vain to keep her eyes above waist level on the older version of her friend. "Alone."

"Sure," Luna agreed. She gave Harry a through kiss goodbye. "I'll be there in a bit Harry."

"Take your time love."

"What did you want to talk about Hermione?"

"How did you and Harry get together?" Hermione asked. She was more than a bit confused, she knew that people changed over time but she'd never expected that they'd turn out the way they seemed to.

"We got together after I rescued him," Luna said dreamily, "from a lifetime of tedium."

"Care to explain that?" Hermione asked.

"Ginny was feeding him love potions," Luna explained, "which would have been fine if she weren't such a prude."

"What?"

"Red heads are supposed to be wild in bed," Luna said with a sigh, "but it's true what they say about blonds being more fun."

"I think that's supposed to be have more fun."

"That too."

"What happened to me?" Hermione asked.

"Harry and I tried to rescue you," Luna said with an unhappy frown, "but it turned out that you were with Ron because you loved him and not because of any potion."

"I married Ron?"

"And pushed out a brat every year," Luna agreed, "not that I don't want children some day but please. But that's not the worst part."

"Worst part?"

"Ron thought it was wrong to shag for fun," Luna explained, "which might have been why you had so many children now that I think about it."

"Oh . . . what was my career?"

"Molly mark II," Luna replied. "He even convinced you to dye your hair red too. Such a shame, I bet you'd have been fun." Hermione shuddered a moment in horror at the fate of her other self.

"But . . . I thought you married Harry?" She said in confusion. "Why would you want to share?"

"Why don't you have a seat," Luna suggested. The two girls sat down on a conveniently located bench. "Some girls like Sausage and some like tacos, others like both."

"Luna are you talking about . . ."

"Sex?" Luna asked. "Why yes I am but I understand that it's traditional to use euphemisms. Now then, boys are the same way. I married Harry and Harry likes tacos, I like both so when we go out to eat we find something we both enjoy. It's things like that that make a marriage last."

"Eep."

"Now then," Luna continued, "to explain my earlier statement. If you hadn't married Ron and consigned yourself to a life of drudgery and red hair, I think you might have been a nice addition to our marriage, because there's no one else in the world we'd have considered a permanent addition, thank Merlin the magical world doesn't follow that silly muggle one on one concept, except you. Was there anything else Hermione?"

"That'll do it Luna," Hermione said faintly.

"Ok Hermione," Luna said with a smile, "I want you to know that you can come to me for anything you need in the future and I'll do my best to help you."

"Thanks Luna," Hermione muttered. She had some serious thinking to do.

"Be sure to tell the other girls that too," Luna called after her.

"I will Luna."

"Now then," Luna said as she walked towards her new rooms, "where were we?"

IIIIIIIIII

Meanwhile, Harry and Luna were exploring the strange apartment that they'd found themselves in.

"Mostly whipped cream and strawberries in the fridge," Harry called over his shoulder.

"Chocolate sauce in the cupboards," Luna called down, "and look at these books I found." She turned it and proudly showed Harry the moving figures drawn on the pages.

"Wow," Harry gasped, "they sure are flexible aren't they?"

"You mean we," Luna said, "look who wrote this."

"Luna and Harry Potter?"

"Be gentle Harry," Luna said demurely, "it's my first time."

"What's your first time?"

"Aren't we going to consummate our marriage?"

"From the looks of things," Harry said with a wave at one of the photos on the counter as he flipped through the book, "we already have."



"Oh . . . wanna find something to eat then?"

"I'll try to whip something together," Harry offered, "see if there's anything in the freezer."

"Ok, husband."

"Husband?"

"We're married in this world aren't we?" Luna demanded.

"Yes but . . ."

"Then what's the problem?" Luna switched gears and looked close to tears. "Are you saying I'm not good enough for you? Do you want a divorce?"

"No but . . ."

"Then what's the problem?"

"The problem is that I don't see anything in the freezer either and I'm not sure how I'm going to whip up something more healthy than chocolate covered cream and strawberries. "

"Oh . . . I'm sorry for being such an emotional girl," Luna said contritely, "it's just that . . . it's not every day you find out you're married."

"It's fine Luna," Harry assured the girl.

"And I don't even remember my wedding," Luna said with a pout. Her attention was drawn to a photo on the wall. "Look at this Harry, we had my dream wedding and I don't even remember it. We're going to have to go through the ceremony again."

IIIIIIII

Albus was pacing his office as he tried to think of how to go about bringing his wayward students home. It was a mystery that wouldn't be easy to solve since their only lead had been turned into a fine pink mist by the other Professors, no one even knew what spell had been

used on the two missing children or even if their swap had been the intended effect or if it was the result of some strange magical reaction.

"Albus," Minerva screamed as she burst into his office, "do you know what Ms. Granger just came to me to ask about?"

"I'm sure you'll tell me Minerva," Dumbledore sighed.

"She wanted to know about magical marriage customs," Minerva growled, "and why we didn't have a program to teach muggle born students about magical customs and culture. I've told you Albus, but you wouldn't listen."

"Surely they can find out from their friends."

"Their friends are just children," Minerva hissed, "children who have been isolated from their parents and have a very limited amount of knowledge on the way things work. It's no wonder most muggle born have very little to do with the rest of society after they leave Hogwarts."

IIIIIIII

It took some doing, but Harry and Luna eventually managed to find 'their' wallets and enough money for take out. The main complication came when it was time to order . . .

"They were speaking French again," Harry muttered as he hung up the phone. Sure, any of the places he'd called would have been delighted to switch to English or for that matter German, Italian, or any one of half a dozen other languages if he'd asked but Harry was ignorant of that little tidbit of information.

"Not surprising," Luna replied, "the directory is in French and that's this countries official language is French."

"I guess," Harry agreed glumly, "I just wish there was some way we could get something to eat."

"Is Harry Potter sir finished banging his Looney like a drum for today and wants Dobby to get him something to eat?" Dobby asked from what had been an empty space only moments before.

"Dobby?" Harry asked in shock.

"Harry Potter sir hasn't started banging his Looney like a drum," Luna replied, "but we'd still like something to eat."

"What is you wanting?"

"Something local," Luna replied, "and it will also have to be filling since we're hungry . . . not to mention the fact that we plan to burn a lot of calories later."

"Yes missy Looney," Dobby agreed.

"Uh . . . Dobby," Harry said slowly.

"Yes Harry Potter sir?"

"You don't think it's odd that we've gotten younger?"

"Harry Potter sir has gotten younger?" Dobby squealed in astonishment. "What has happened."

"You didn't notice?"

"Dobby just thought youz is being kinky again," the little house elf replied quickly, "what is happening?"

"We've either lost our memories and gotten younger or we switched with our older selves," Luna said brightly, "either way we're hungry and would like to get something to eat before Harry starts banging me like a bongo drum."

"Yes missy Looney," Dobby agreed quickly. With a snap of his fingers the table was set and another covered it with food. "Dobby will be going now before Harry Potter sir traumatizes him by getting kinky with his Looney again."

"Bye Dobby," Luna giggled, "come on Harry. It's time to get something to eat."

"Uh . . . right," Harry agreed slowly.

"And after that we can talk about how you're going to bang me like a drum."

IIIIIIIIII

To the private disappointment of most of the class and the very public disappointment of Lavender, Parvati, and surprisingly Draco Malfoy. 'What?' Draco asked. 'He's hot . . . I mean, she's hot.' Luna and Harry chose to wear clothing for their first class.

"Easy access," Luna explained as the class began, "that's why Harry is wearing a kilt and I'm wearing a skirt. So you guys study something while Harry bends me over our desk."

"Professor?" Hermione's hand waved. "Couldn't you teach us something first?"

"I suppose we could," Harry agreed.

"Awwwww." Luna frowned at the other girl and began sulking.

"Let me see." He dug around his pockets until his hand came out holding several black marbles. "Ok, these are smoke pellets. You throw them on the ground and use it as a distraction to escape, bring your potions kits and I'll teach you how to make them yourselves."

"But won't Professor Snape get angry if you teach us Potions?"

"Who cares what that pathetic dick says," Harry snorted, "but with luck it'll bring us to lesson three. Now, everyone get a partner then come up and I want each of you to take one of my balls."

"Professor Luna," Hermione called out, "there's an odd number of students so can I be with you and Professor Harry?"

"You're a bit young for me," Luna admitted, "so you should probably wait until this world's Luna and Harry get back. If that hasn't happened by the time you graduate then by all means."

"And you can work with us for the class for the time being if you like," Harry said smoothly.

|||||

Luna watched Harry eat with a loving look on her face. This was like a dream come true for the blond girl, an indeterminate amount of time alone with the boy that had captured her interest in an apartment full of sex manuals and pornography. She didn't know the name of the Defense Professor that had sent them to this place but she couldn't wait to thank him when they got back home, well him or his heirs if the other Professors had taken advantage of Dumbledore's distraction.

"Oops," Luna said cheerfully, "I dropped my fork. Better go under the table to find it." With an impish smile, Luna slid out of her chair and under the tablecloth. "Could you move back a bit Harry?" Luna requested. "I can't get to it when your chair is so far forward."

"Sure Luna," Harry agreed, "how's this?"

"Just a . . . perfect," Luna cooed.

"Luna what are you . . . ohhh."

|||||

Snape stormed into the Great Hall with an enraged look on his face. Once his eyes locked on the couple at the staff table, he became two shades redder and began stalking towards them.

"Potter," Snape screamed, "how dare you teach Potions in my class?"

"Looks like we're gonna have lesson three early," Harry said calmly to Luna.

"Looks like," Luna agreed.

"I also called you a pathetic dick," Harry said loudly, "you pathetic dick."

"Graaaaa." With an inarticulate scream of rage, Snape began throwing curses in Harry's general direction.

"Now then." Harry grabbed Dumbledore's beard and jerked the old man into the path of the oncoming hexes. "Professor Snape." He stepped over Dumbledore's fallen form. "Has been good enough to agree to help us with a practical Defense Lesson." He sidestepped the next curse and summoned Draco into the path of the last few. "Watch." Unnoticed by Snape, Luna had calmly risen from her seat and cast a single stunner. "Teamwork students," Harry said loudly, "that's why we had you pair up and without it we could have never have arranged such a realistic demonstration."

"Let's all give a big hand to Professor Snape," Luna said happily, "for being such a good sport." The students cheered and clapped wildly. "Now let's have another for Draco and the Headmaster for being such good human shields." Luna smiled at the students as they cheered the other two. "Excellent."

|||||||

Luna led the dazed Harry into the bedroom with a look of remorse on her face. After a few minutes of rummaging through the bedside table, she emerged with a length of silk rope and a ping pong paddle.

"I'm sorry Harry. I've been a really bad girl," Luna sobbed, "you must . . . you must tie me to the bed frame and have your way with me."

"I must?"

"Yes," Luna agreed, "she thrust the items into his hands and assumed a submissive position on the bed."

"Well . . . you gotta do what you gotta do I guess."

"Perhaps you could start things off with a nice spanking?" Luna asked hopefully. "Cause I've been such a bad girl?"

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Harry sat at his desk with a silly grin on his face as the students came in to the classroom. Several of them frowned in confusion or disappointment when they didn't see their other Professor as they took their seats.

"Today class," Harry said with his eyes focused on something a thousand yards away, "you're going to learn how to apparate in "Hogwarts."

"But Professor," Hermione protested, "everyone knows that you can't apparate at Hogwarts."

"Of course you can't," Harry agreed happily, "that's why you're going to learn something we picked up in Japan. It goes really well with the smoke bombs."

"Oh."

"Now this form of transport is like apparation but . . . ahh," Harry sighed in contentment and stood up from his desk. Most of the students watched in confusion and a few with knowing grins as Luna crawled out from under the desk and then stood back to allow Harry to take her former position.

"Now then," Luna said. A silly grin formed on her face and her eyes closed half way. "This form of transport is exactly like apparation but you can do it at Hogwarts . . . oh and you don't need a license."

AN: Polish by dogbertcarroll, zambkptkn, and clell65619

Omake: How I'd End This

Harry and Luna stood in the middle of the Great Hall and waved goodbye as the waited to be sent back to their world.

"Good bye all," Luna called out, "remember what I said Hermione. I'm sure I'd be happy to share . . . and if I'm not then just come to our world and we'd be happy to have you."

"I will Luna," Hermione called back.

Everyone held their breath as the two greatest DADA Professors that they'd ever had slowly faded away into nothing to be replaced a few minutes later by another, smaller pair of figures that appeared to be shagging on the floor.

"I've failed," Dumbledore said in horror, "rather than sending them back I turned them into children.

"No wait," Minerva said, "I think it is our Harry and Luna."

"Ride me like a pony," the younger Luna lookalike screamed, "give it to me harder ahhhhhhhhhh. " The two figures changed positions three times before a rather vocal finale.

"Looks like they found something to do in the other dimension," Minerva said dryly, "or rather someone."

"Luna," Hermione began, "can I talk with you about Harry?"

"I'm sorry Hermione," Luna said contritely, "I didn't know you were interested in him too. Despite that, I'm not willing to step aside for you."

"That's not . . ."

"Oh? What then?"

"Room for one more?"

Omake by meteoricshipyards

"Harry? According to this document, we're married. Let me see that paper... In fact we're newly married. I'm guessing we're on our honeymoon." The last was said loudly, as Harry had disappeared into the bathroom. Luna took the opportunity to check the suitcase that appeared to belong to the 'other' Luna.



"So, we're in a Monaco hotel, on our honeymoon. Any idea how to contact Dumb..." His question was cut off as he looked at Luna in the lacy nightgown that she had slipped into.

"That's very ... is gauzy a word?"

"I was thinking 'transparent' myself," she answered.

"Yes, that's a very good description. . . ."

"Harry, it's very rude to stare at your almost nude wife without taking your clothes off. And close your mouth, you're drooling."

"Yes, dear," he said distractedly. Luna smirked to herself, wondering when his brain would start working again. Not too soon, she hoped.

Omake: Rat Back

Peter looked around in wonder, he was back in time, he could make right what once went wrong, he could redeem his greatest mistake.

"Something wrong Peter?" James asked.

"What?"

"We were just talking about how you should become the secret keeper instead of Sirius," James explained.

"Oh . . . right, I don't think that's such a good idea."

"Why not?"

"Well." Peter pulled up his arm to expose his tattoo.

"You're a Death Eater?"

"It showed up after I woke up from a night of heavy drinking," Peter admitted, "at first I thought you and Sirius put it on me like that time you had the words 'insert here' and an arrow pointing down tattooed onto my lower back."

"But it wasn't Sirius pranking you?"

"I haven't ruled that out," Peter said quickly, "but after I got called to a meeting yesterday I stopped thinking that it was a fake."

"How could you kill innocent people?" Lily demanded.

"Not sure I could," Peter admitted, "and haven't."

"Why didn't you tell us about this?"

"I just did."

"Oh . . . right."

AN: Idea by savagehawk2020.

Omake: Luna and Moody

It was dark when Moody awoke. He wasn't sure what had happened, all he remembered was a blond blur before everything went black. Some careful checking revealed that his prostheses were gone along with his wand, back up wand, back up back up wand, and other assorted items.

"You're awake?" A soft voice purred. "Good, I was hoping that you'd answer a couple of personal questions."

"Go to hell," Moody growled. He was confused, the voice was too light to be Bellatrix . . . almost sounded like a child. He shuddered at the thought of the Dark Lord recruiting children to fight for him. "You'll get nothing from me."

"You refused to teach Harry Potter over the summer," the voice said calmly, "and you're helping Dumbledore keep him isolated."

"Yeah?"

"I want to know why," the voice continued, "and what it will take to get you to change your mind."

"Piss off."

"You know I could just force a bunch of potion down your throat?" The voice asked conversationally. "Or I suppose I could also do things the old fashioned way. But how about we try things differently? I'll answer one of your questions for every one of my you answer, if you're honest I'll return your things and let you go."

"Fine," Moody agreed, "who are you?" In reply the bag was yanked off his head to allow him to see his captor. "Lovegood?"

"Uh huh," Luna agreed, "Luna Lovegood."

"Why have you taken me?"

"My question first," Luna said firmly, "why won't you teach Harry?"

"Dumbledore asked me not to," Moody said with a frown, "and my question?"

"I took you to find out about Harry," Luna said in exasperation, "weren't you listening earlier? Now then, why are you keeping Harry prisoner?"

"Dumbledore again," Moody said, "you mean to tell me that you've captured me and held me prisoner to find out about your boyfriend?"

"Harry's not my boyfriend yet," Luna giggled, "but I wanted to ask him and I couldn't find him so I thought the most reasonable way to find him would be through you. How could I convince you to help me rescue Harry and to teach him over the summer?"

"How did you get past my security?" Moody said. "I need to know that to tell you the price."

"Ok, but you owe me another answer."

"Agreed."

"It wasn't hard," Luna said thoughtfully, "I just walked in. Didn't even have to disable many traps."

“Right,” Moody sighed, “help me with my security and I'll do what you want.”

“Agreed,” Luna said brightly, “what kind of girl do you think Harry likes?”

“You if the boy has any sense,” Moody said sourly, “got past my security and caught a retired master Auror. Dark Lord is screwed.”

AN: I read something by Clell65619 to effect that Moody is the polar opposite of Luna. That's where I got this idea.

Disclaimer: Just a tale about the residents of Underhill.

## Fair Folk

There are many tales of the fair folk, of Puck the trickster, of Oberon King of the fey, and of Titania his queen. Tales of the Summer court and their rivalry with the winter, although there were rumors that they were both the same group wearing different silks and furs.

What there are not is tales of the nobodies, the common ordinary fairies that inhabit our world that regard the schemes of their nobility with the same sense of detachment that the common man regards his leaders. And since no voting is allowed in their leadership it allowed the average fae to consider it more of theater than law, not that the fae have much truck with law anyway.

We all know the story of Harry Potter; of how his parents were killed, of how he was placed on his relatives' doorstep with not but a note of explanation, and of how in most timelines he would grow up abused and neglected. But what if something else happened? What if a group of Traveling Fairies . . . no not that kind, (tho the story of Harry being raised by the local Ballerina and Theater group does have a happier ending than most mainlines), were to find him crying on the front step of the Dursley house a few minutes after Dumbledore abandoned him, in the chilly morning's frost?

"Did you find what was distressing the birds?" A three inch woman with a pair of gossamer butterfly wings called out. She looked over towards where her friend was hovering in irritation. "Well?" With a sigh, she made the short flight over to see what had so enthralled the other pixie. "It's a baby."

"Cute one too," her friend agreed, "such an adorable little nose."

"And just look at those eyes," the first pixie said excitedly, "look at 'em."

"One of the Lords he is," her companion agreed, "no mistaking that shade. We should keep 'im. Jest think of it, a lord of our very own."

"His blood is rather weak," the first fae said doubtfully. "Been generations since one of the high ones dallied with this one's ancestor."

"Weak or strong he's one of the nobs," her companion said haughtily, "one might say it's our duty to look after him and blood can always be strengthened"

"He's such a cute little thing isn't he?"

"And 's not like the humans want him," the fae said with a nod, "jest abandoned a perfectly good baby. They've got no cause to complain if someone decides to take it for themselves."

"But where will we keep it? We've got no great mansion of our own and nobs seem to need things like that."

"This one looks sturdy enough," she hovered around to inspect the Dursley house, "could be better but it will work for now. When he gets bigger... we'll just get a bigger place."

"I'll get the others then shall I?"

"And I'll look after our new child."

The fae never lost their fascination in Harry and because of this he had a happy if less than normal childhood. Every moment of the day he was surrounded by any number of attendants devoted to ensuring that he led a happy and healthy life, and that he grew into a responsible and successful member of the noble class, which is quite ironic since the noble class of the fae seemed allergic to responsibility, quite like their muggle counterparts in government.

One odd consequence of this was the fact that several of the more . . . outgoing pixies were quite open about the fact that they'd appointed themselves members of his harem. A term Harry had yet to learn an idea that would drive an outside observer insane while they attempted to visualize the mechanics of how things would work between a six inch girl and a full sized human.

Hagrid would be one of the few who didn't go cross eyed over the notion, but then Hagrid's father had left him with his spell book, containing spells that had kept his five foot nothing father happily wed to a twenty foot tall giantess.

The Dursley family quickly learned to ignore the new addition to their household and the 'guests' that came with him. So long as they provided the boy with a small amount of food and a place to stay, the house stayed clean and misfortune was avoided. If however the boy was mistreated in any way, misfortune was soon to follow.

"What are you doing Dudley?" Harry asked with a comical look of confusion on his face.

"Gonna teach you who the top dog in this neighborhood is," Dudley replied with a growl.

"Get 'im big D."

"Show him he's not better than we are."

"I don't think you want to do that Dudley," Harry said with a grin, "don't think they'd like it."

"Yeah?" Dudley said. "You think your bugs are going to stop me from pounding you?" He took a step towards Harry. . . . Actually, he tried to take a step towards Harry, but with his shoes tied together, all

that really happened the large boy ended up on the floor with the wind knocked out of him.

Harry shook his head and wandered off, looking for the big oak that allowed passage to the dryad Ar'tana's glade, where she was giving him flute lessons. Strangely enough she never played, just directed him in how to and promised when he was older she'd demonstrate her flute playing skills first hand for him.

It was far from the strangest habit he'd noticed among his friends, so he paid it little thought.

Dudley came home from playing later that day to find his father laid up on the couch with his leg in a cast and a foreboding expression on his face.

"What did you do?" Vernon hissed.

"He made me skin my knee," Dudley whined. "I wasn't even gonna hurt him much, what was I supposed to do? The freak wouldn't give me his lunch. I couldn't look like I was afraid of him in front of my friends."

"Go to your room," Vernon growled, "no supper tonight." The man frowned as his boy left, wondering just why Dudley couldn't seem to understand that out of all the children in the world the one that had to be left alone was one Harry Potter.

Harry returned home wearing a mishmash of cast off silks that had once adorned the nobles of the Seelie and Unseelie courts with several small pixies hovering attentively around him. Life had been good for the boy, he had plenty of food, fine clothing if a bit worn by the standards of their original owners, and dozens of friends attending him at every moment. So what if the rest of the neighborhood thought him a bit odd for the fact that he had conversations with unseen companions and colorblind for his mismatched silks, Harry didn't need them and his friends had assured him that if they were too stupid to seek out his company then they weren't worth knowing anyway.

The few children that had sought his company were, for the most part, from traditional Irish families and they never stuck around, just paid their respects, gave a small gift and left.

They weren't what he'd call friends, but they were always very respectful to him, which tended to set Dudley off, as they were also the few that wouldn't let him bully them.

As he walked into the house and noticed his uncle's condition, Harry stopped the animated conversation he was having with a small girl resting on his shoulder to investigate what had happened.

"What happened uncle?" He asked innocently.



"Just a small accident at work boy," Vernon said quickly. He averted his eyes to avoid seeing the guileless expression on the boy's face and the chance of catching a glimpse of something unnatural. "Nothing you need to worry about."

"If you say so uncle Vernon," Harry agreed with a smile, "did you hear about the letter I got this morning?"

"No I didn't boy," Vernon replied in as polite a tone as he could muster, "what happened?"

"A magic school wants me to become a wizard," Harry continued with a smile.

"And what do your . . . guardians think about this?" Vernon chose his words carefully.

"They haven't decided," Harry said easily, "why?"

"Because I think this might be a good opportunity for you," Vernon replied. He made the mistake of looking in Harry's direction and caught the small woman on Harry's shoulder looking at him intently. "Every proper young gentleman should get a good education after all." And it would keep the boy and his 'friends' out of the house and away from Privet Drive for most of the year, he thought gleefully. "You want to learn magic don't you?"

"I guess," Harry agreed with a shrug.

"Course you do," Vernon said easily, "and if this place isn't good enough then I'm sure your . . . guardians can find some place more suitable for you."

"Did you hear that Harry?" The tiny woman on his shoulder asked. "Every proper young gentleman must have education."

"I heard," Harry agreed, "so I'm going to Hogwarts?"

"Not until after we've had a chance to check things out," she replied, "even then I think we should reserve the right to find a better school."

"Okay." Harry liked the idea of seeing someplace new. He'd already seen the local edges of Underhill, rare tho they were in this town, and learning wizard magic might be just as much fun as playing with fae.

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Minerva McGonagall got the surprise of her life a few hours later when she found a small sealed envelope sitting on her desk that had none of the signs that usually marked a piece of mail as being delivered by owls.

"Curious," she muttered to herself. "I wonder how Mr. Potter made his reply." The response was in a fine hand, it was also short and to the point. "The cheek of it," she laughed when she got to the part that informed her that Harry would be withdrawn if the education provided by Hogwarts was of less than the highest quality. "Let me see," she said as she flipped through her calendar, "I'm taking the muggle born students on a tour of Diagon tomorrow so." She wrote out a quick note to Harry telling him that she would attempt to pick him up on the next afternoon making sure to express her regrets that she hadn't been able to at an earlier time. After all, she thought to herself, if young Mister Potter's guardians were willing to be polite then it behooved her to do the same.

"It's never easy to admit that one was wrong," Minerva said to herself, "and it appears that I was wrong about the Dursley family. With luck, they will be as cultured in person as they were in correspondence."

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Harry was waiting for his escort to magical society on the front steps of the Dursley home wearing his finest silks when Minerva arrived to pick him up the next day.

"Mr. Potter I presume?" Minerva asked with a raised eyebrow. She was startled to learn that a wizard raised in the muggle world had the same lack of fashion sense that characterized all but the most sensible purebloods. To be fair, her own crimson and gold pantsuit was a bit understated in comparison to Harry's chaotic silks and did stand out a bit less.

"Deputy Headmistress McGonagall," Harry said stiffly. A flash of motion by his ear caught Minerva's attention but it seemed to disappear before she could focus on it. "Um . . . my card." He pulled a small case out of his pocket and withdrew a business card with gold lettering.

"Thank you Mr. Potter," Minerva said dryly, "it's good to see that at least one of my new students has a healthy respect for etiquette."

"There was a book in the library," Harry said with a blush. That he'd been forced to read until he could recite parts of it from memory. "On how to be a well mannered gentleman around ladies of good breeding." And consensus among the pixies was that a Deputy Headmistress had an impressive enough title to merit such treatment.

"Very good," Minerva said approvingly, "take my hand please."

"Where are we going?"

"I'm going to use a bit of magic to transport us to a pub called the Leaky Cauldron," Minerva explained, "where we are going to meet some of the other children that are going to attend school with you."

"Oh," Harry said in understanding.

"Ready?"

"Yes Deputy Headmistress," Harry agreed.

"You may call me Professor McGonagall if you wish," Minerva said fondly. She should have known that Lily's sister couldn't have been all bad, certainly seemed to have raised young Harry right anyway.

IIIIIIII

Hermione was waiting with her parents in front of the Leaky Cauldron for the arrival of the Professor that would introduce her to the magical world. She couldn't wait to see the sights and smell the smells, hoping with all her heart that the smells would be better than they had been during the family vacation to Calcutta the year before. She'd been proud of her parents when they told her that they were going to

vacation in a slum to provide dental care to the unwashed masses, that pride had waned a bit when she realized how badly the unwashed masses and the slums that they inhabited smelled.

But this will be different, she told herself, this is a whole new world of magic just waiting to be discovered. Hermione would later admit that she was more than a bit disappointed when her guide arrived by walking out of the disreputable looking pub rather than in some flashy magical way.

"Ms. Hermione Granger?" Minerva asked.

"Yes," Hermione replied.

"Come this way please," Minerva said, "we're lucky to have another student with us today. I'd like to introduce you to Mr. Harry Potter, I hope you two get along."

"Charmed," Harry said with a formal bow. A bit of slight of hand produced a card which he presented to the blushing Hermione with a flourish after kissing the back of her hand, as his friends had suggested.

"Thank you," Hermione said happily. Five minutes in the magical world and it was already better than primary school.

"Odd clothing choice don't you think?" Hermione's father whispered to his wife.

"Well, silk is a bit ostentatious isn't it?" She whispered back.

"Ah . . . right, I forgot. Suppose colorblindness could be common in those that possess the magical gene," he mused.

"What do you mean by that?"

"Nothing at all dear," he said with a glance at her lime green skirt with matching pink top.

"Right this way," Minerva said, "our first stop will be Gringotts Bank where you will be able to exchange your pounds for gold and Mr. Potter can make a withdrawal from his vault."

"I have a vault?" Harry asked in surprise.

"Your parents left it to you," Minerva explained.

"Oh." Harry nodded his head in agreement when the miniature woman on his shoulder suggested moving it to underhill where it would be safe. "Perhaps it's time to claim a bit for myself."

"What was that Mr. Potter?"

"What was what Professor?"

"Never mind," Minerva sighed. Well mannered or not, he was still a child. "And here we are. Now, before we go in I thought I might warn you that this bank is run by goblins."

"Goblins?" Hermione squeaked. "Like in . . ."

"Several popular novels yes," Minerva agreed, "be polite and you shouldn't have any trouble aside from having to deal with their rudeness."

"Oh."

"Interesting," Harry muttered as he shook off the geas that hit all patrons when they walked through the door. "Minor compulsion to ignore the fine print and a larger one to prevent theft?"

"Those are the main ones," the tiny woman on his shoulder agreed.

"Mr. Potter," Minerva said firmly to get the boy's attention. "Please take your key."

"What do I do with it Professor?"

"Hand it to the goblin at the counter and ask to see your vault," she replied, "when you get there I suggest you withdraw at least twenty

Galleons . . . that's the gold coins for your school supplies and for snacks on the train."

"Aren't you coming Professor?"

"It is considered rude to invite oneself to see another's vault," Minerva said primly. "I will of course accompany you if you request it."

"That's okay Professor," Harry said, "why don't you stay with Hermione and her family."

"Very good then," Minerva agreed. She shot a meaningful look at the goblin as Harry handed the creature his key.

After a few moments of checking to make sure that Harry was in fact the owner of a genuine Gringotts key, the goblin handed it back to Harry and motioned towards one of the waiting carts.

"Just get in then?" Harry asked.

"Yes," the goblin agreed, watching the fae on Harry's shoulder cautiously.

"I am Limpdik," the Goblin in the cart introduced himself as the cart began to move.

The tiny girl giggled in Harry's ear, as she prepared a spell to help change the goblin's name, since he had been rather polite, for a goblin, to her Harry.

"Nice to meet you," Harry muttered as the cart began to pick up speed. As they got deeper, he felt a tingle that marked the transitioned from London to underhill. Harry was quite impressed by the seamless way they'd made the trip and looked forward to seeing what other surprises they had in store.

AN: Formulaic . . . check, Super Harry . . . check, uh . . . double check. Harem . . . check, though I must admit I only added that for the line about the mechanics. Scenes and polish by; meteoricshipyards and dogbertcarroll.

### Mini Omake: The Entrance

Harry walked into the Great Hall wearing a mish mash of silks that had once adorned Sidhe nobility. He ignored the chattering children around him in favor of the sky above.

### Omake: Sorting

"Of course," the Hat agreed, "your guardians are quite correct. I would suggest the VIP quarters in the eastern wing but the choice is up to them . . . next."

"You didn't sort him," Dumbledore pointed out.

"The child and his retinue get to pick out one of the VIP wings," the Hat replied, "it's an old rule but still in place."

"I see," Dumbledore said in shock. He'd never dreamed that Harry was enough of a celebrity to merit this kind of treatment. "Who shall we assign as his head of house?"

"His guardians have taken care of him before and they shall continue to do so," the hat said mildly, "next."

"That's not fair," Draco squealed. "I wanna be resorted."

"What is it Mr. Malfoy?" The Hat sighed.

"I want my own wing of the castle too," Draco whined.

"Denied."

"When my father hears of . . ."

### Addition by dbagini

"I'll remind him that it wasn't his hysterics and crying that stopped me from putting him into Hufflepuff, and if he ever makes the slightest derogatory comment about me I'll be sure to sort the next ten generations of his spawn into a new house called weak-pansy-boy-losers."

### Omake: Dobby

Dobby was paralyzed the second he crossed the line into Harry's abode, borders were very important to the fey.

"What are you planning to do to Harry?" A comically fierce looking Brownie demanded shrilly. She regarded her bound cousin carefully, looking for any sign that he might pose a danger to her lord.

"Dobby wishes to protect Harry Potter sir," Dobby felt himself compelled to reply. "From Dobby's evil master . . . oh Dobby is a bad elf, Dobby must be punished."

"Do you wish to leave your evil master?" The small fey asked.

"Dobby does," the house elf agreed. "But is impossible, evil master will never give Dobby his freedom."

"Harry is of noble Sidhe blood," the fey said proudly. "He will release you from the oath of your blood."

"All house elves are free to leave their masters if they so desire," Harry said with a bit of prompting. "Slaves no more so mote it be."

### Mini Omake by dogbertcarroll

The Lords of Fae have withdrawn from the world of man long ago, it was the season for them to do so, leaving behind the slightest vestiges of their power, here and there, of course the young and wild one always wander about as they please.

### Omake by Kinsfire and thecanineone

Luna gave Hermione one of her famous slightly pop-eyed bemused looks.

"What does 'Oooh sugar daddy hurt me please' mean?" she asked. "And why did you start repeatedly mumbling it when you saw the picture? And why are you drooling a bit?"



Hermione, for once in her life, was a bit taken aback, resulting in a whole string of blinks.

"Um, if you don't understand you're too young?" she tried.

"Oh." Luna said, and chewed on that for a while. Hermione went back to being all distracted and doodling things that looked suspiciously like Harry in the margin of her parchment.

"Does it have anything to-do with why you told the pixie to try to keep you out of the harem?" Luna eventually asked.

Hermione stopped doodling, realised what she'd drawn, went to erase it, changed her mind, and started copying her arithmancy homework to an erotica-free piece of parchment, all the while trying to contain the Weasely-strength blush that was threatening to spread itself from her hairline to the somewhat conservative turtleneck of her jumper.

"Does it?" Luna repeated.

"Yes." Hermione finally admitted, the blush winning.

"Good." Luna said, nodding happily. "I think the kinky sex is going to be the best thing that'll ever happen to us, then."

Hermione did a double-take so thorough her quill landed up stuck in the ceiling. Then she sat back and parsed that. Liking the equation, she very slowly nodded, staring at her lap.

A grubby-but-slender fair-skinned nail-bitten hand intercepted her view. Looking, up, she found an obviously smiling Luna.

"Partners?" the blonde Ravenclaw oddity offered.

Hermione considered that. She really did. It took all of five seconds.

"Partners." She said, accepting the handshake.

Disclaimer: Be weary of dealing with House Elves. This is yet another independent Harry fic.

YAIHF

Harry didn't know what to do, everything that could go wrong with his life was going wrong. His godfather was dead, Voldemort was back, he was with the Dursleys. In short, life really sucked.

"I need to pry myself out from under Dumbledore's thumb," Harry muttered to himself, "I need to train and stuff. But how?" He sighed, it would never happen, he could never do it alone. "If only I had help, someone who would be loyal to me . . . like Dobby for example."

"You called Dobby Harry Potter sir?" Dobby's voice asked from what had been an empty space a moment before.

"I need help becoming independent," Harry explained, more than a bit amused that the little elf had managed to bypass the 'elite' guards that the Order had stationed. "And becoming a powerful and knowledgeable wizard."

"Dobby can help," the little elf shouted, "Dobby will help Harry Potter sir."

"Great," Harry said cheerfully, "I knew I could count on you."

"Dobby must go to arrange things for Harry Potter sir now," the little elf said seriously.

"Bye Dobby."

Bye Harry Potter sir."

Dobby's first stop after leaving Harry's room was Gringotts Bank to make a few withdrawals. Even a house elf knew that the first step in becoming independent was a shopping spree and he was more than a bit flattered to think that Harry Potter sir had entrusted him with this important task.

"What is it?" The teller demanded.

"Dobby needs to withdraw money from Harry Potter sir's vault," he replied.

"You don't have access," the goblin growled, "will that be all?"

"Oh no," Dobby cried, "Dobby forgot to ask the great Harry Potter sir to grant access to his great Potter vault. Dobby is a bad elf, an embarrassment to all elf kind. Now how will Harry Potter sir become independent if Dobby can't buy half the things for sale in Diagon and Knockturn alley with a possible side trip to Hogsmead?"

"Not my problem," the goblin sneered.

"Wait," Dobby squealed happily, "bad Malfoys never removed Dobby from their access list. Dobby would like to make a withdrawal from bad Malfoy's vault."

"How much?"

"All of it." Flush with cash, Dobby wandered out of Gringotts. "What shall Dobby do now?" The house elf wondered to himself. "Would Harry Potter sir wish to have a lot of wonderful things like a trunk with secret rooms?" He thought hard on the problem. "No, if a trunk with many rooms would be good then a castle would be better." Dobby congratulated himself for his wonderful plan. "Now where shall Dobby put Harry Potter sir's castle?"

After hours of carefully searching the United Kingdom, Dobby eventually settled on Gruinard Island as the sight of the new Fortress Harry Potter sir. Of course Harry had final choice on any name, but Dobby thought it best to have a name in mind during the construction period.

House elf magic is powerful magic and so it should come as no surprise that Dobby completed construction within hours of breaking ground. Harry Potter's new 'house' was heavily warded, large, and contained everything that Harry could expect to need in his quest for power and independence so use your imagination and no more need be written about it.

"Now all Dobby needs to do is get a library for the great and powerful Harry Potter sir so that the great and powerful Harry Potter sir can use those books to study and become the greatest and most powerful Harry Potter sir that he can be."

Dobby popped away from Anthrax Island and arrived in Diagon Alley to start the greatest shopping spree ever made by a house elf using what had been Lucius Malfoy's money only a short time before.

Five hours and a whole lot of money later, Dobby returned to the Fortress Harry Potter sir with a giant stack of books and a new found problem.

"Where will Dobby put the great and powerful Harry Potter sir's books," he waled, "Dobby is a bad elf who forgot to buy furniture for the great and powerful Harry Potter sir's books." He frowned in thought. "While Dobby is at it, he may as well also get chairs and tables and such so that the great and powerful Harry Potter sir can sit down and sleep on something besides the floor . . . oh and a desk for the great and powerful Harry Potter sir so that the great and powerful Harry Potter sir can have a place to study."

This line of reasoning prompted another shopping spree depleting the once great Malfoy fortune even further since the great and powerful Harry Potter sir deserved only the best hand made antique furniture and that didn't come cheap.

Dobby surveyed his work with a sense of profound satisfaction as he tried to think of what else the great and powerful Harry Potter sir needed to become the greatest, most powerful, and above all independentest Harry Potter sir ever.

"Hmmm." Dobby racked his mind. "Wait, Dobby saw something in bad Malfoy's vault before that would help the great and powerful Harry Potter sir." Dobby popped out and appeared before a surly looking goblin with diamond encrusted teeth.

"Yes?" The goblin asked.

"Dobby wants to have everything else in the bad Malfoy vaults," Dobby replied, "and all the papers in bad Malfoy's files."

"There's a hundred galleon processing fee for a rush job," the goblin said with a leer.

"Charge it to the bad Malfoy account," Dobby said quickly.

"You do realize that there will be extra fees for having an empty account don't you?" The goblin asked. "And that it would be cheaper to just pay the account ending fee/bribe?"

"Dobby thinks goblin should charge as many fees to bad Malfoy family as goblin wants," Dobby said impatiently.

"Just asking," the goblin said with a grin, "here are your new things."

"Hmmm, deed to bad Malfoy's house, deed to bad Malfoy's other house, blackmail, ah . . . here it is." A grin split Dobby's face as he popped out to enact the next stage of his plan.

"My word," the unspeakable on duty in the secure room of the Department of Mysteries exclaimed, "how did you get in here?"

"Dobby is here for all your research and cool items," the house elf replied.

"I'm afraid I can't just give it to you," the 'guard' said regretfully.

"Oh . . . Dobby forgot to give you authorization."

"Hmm?" The guard took the paper. "Give the holder of this paper anything he wants, signed Minister Fudge. Everything seems to be in order then, have a nice day."

"Dobby wishes incompetent guard a nice day too,"

"Hey! I'm not incompetent," the guard complained.

"But yous is giving Dobby, a simple house elf, everything yous is suppose to be guarding," Dobby explained, like he was speaking to a small child.

"Well, yeah. But my job is to guard it from unauthorized people and with that sheet of paper, you are authorized. So, really I'm just doing

my job. The problem is further up the line, like for instance, the person who filled out the form that authorized you."

"So Fudgey is being the incompetent one?"

"Without a doubt. If we were breeding for incompetence, then Fudge would be the alpha male. That's in box #26 by the way. Of course I told the unspeakables that breeding for incompetence to try and limit government screwups was a bad idea, but did they listen to me? Nooo..."

Dobby just nodded and slowly backed away from the ranting guard before he popped out. Dobby spent the next hour getting everything arranged so that the great and powerful Harry Potter sir would be happy when the great and powerful Harry Potter sir arrived at the Fortress Great and Powerful Harry Potter sir which would serve as the great and powerful Harry Potter sir's home.

Harry was sitting on his bed when Dobby returned to tell him the news that everything was ready so that he could become independent.

AN: Broke it in half, sort of. Figure I could have tossed the below Omake into this if I wanted to but I'm fine with stopping things here. Polish by dogbertcarroll.

Omake: To Those Who Hate Harems

Hermione woke up with a vague sense of wrongness that told her that she was not alone in her room. Her left hand groped for her wand as her right frantically rubbed the sleep out of her eyes.

"Dobby is not here to harm you," the house elf tried to assure the girl, "Dobby is here to make a proposal."

"What do you need?" Hermione asked.

"Dobby would like to hire Harry Potter sir's Grangy to be Harry Potter sir's tutor to help Harry Potter sir become the best wizard that Harry Potter sir can be," he replied. "Not that Dobby doesn't think that Harry

Potter sir isn't already a great and powerful wizard, but Dobby thinks that Harry Potter sir can become even greater and more powerful."

"Sure," Hermione agreed, "why not. I'd have helped Harry anyway but I guess that it'll be nice to have a bigger book budget."

"Horay," Dobby cheered, "now if Harry Potter sir's Grangy will just sign this employment contract?"

"Give it here," Hermione said with an outstretched hand. "Everything seems to be in order." She quickly signed the contract and handed it back. "What now?"

"Dobby would like to ask that Harry Potter sir's Grangy gets packed and ready to go to Fortress Harry Potter sir," he replied.

"Fortress Harry Potter sir?" Hermione asked the suddenly empty room. "Maybe I have to rethink this whole SPEW thing . . . I suppose that they could be institutionalized instead of freed . . . or maybe we could make house elf reservations?"

Dobby's next stop was to find a body guard to guard the body of the great and powerful Harry Potter sir. Not that Harry Potter sir couldn't protect his Harry Potter sirness from bad wizards, but Dobby would feel better if Harry Potter sir had a body guard to help Harry Potter sir guard his body.

"What the?" Tonks squeaked. "I mean." She cleared her throat. "What the?" She said in a much more confident tone.

"Dobby is here to hire Tonky to help guard Harry Potter sir's body," the little elf explained.

"Get paid for what I'm already doing for free?" Tonks squealed. "Ahem, I mean let's see the contract."

"Here Tonky."

"Hmm." Tonks squinted at the contract in confusion for a few seconds before shrugging her shoulders and handing it back. "Here you go."

“Tonky should pack now,” Dobby ordered, “so that Tonky is ready to go to fortress Harry Potter sir.” With that, he popped out on his way to his next destination.

“Fortress Harry Potter sir?” Tonks repeated dumbly. “Odd name for the Dursley house.”

Dobby frowned in confusion when he arrived not in France to recruit Harry Potter sir's new financial advisor like he had planned, but in a room painted plaid in front of a gawky blond covering her eyes.

“Guess who,” the blond said in a perky voice.

“Dobby thinks that it Harry Potter sir?”

“You're right,” Luna agreed, “I was thinking of Harry.”

“Why did Lunytik kidnap Dobby?”

“I didn't kidnap you,” Luna said in a scandalized voice, “I merely redirected your trip to appear here and then raised the wards to prevent you from leaving.”

“Dobby fails to see a difference,” the house elf admitted, “but Dobby will take Lunytik's word on it.”

“I may be wondering why you asked me here.”

“Dobby may be wondering that too,” the house elf said with a nod. It was so nice when everyone could agree on the details.

“You want me to become Harry's haberdasher,” Luna said with a grin.

“Does Harry Potter sir need a haberdasher?”

“Who knows.”

“Does Lunytik know how to be a haberdasher?”

“Haven't the faintest idea on how to start; I do know when to start.”

“When?”



“Why right now of course,” Luna said quickly, “hand me that contract.”

“Here Lunytik goes.” Dobby watched as the odd blond perused the contract, something none of the other girls had the sense to do before signing.

“Ooh,” Luna squealed, “I especially like this clause about becoming Harry's plaything.”

“Is great honor,” Dobby agreed, “Dobby added it to every contract.”

“Well, here you go.” Luna signed it with a flourish and handed the contract back to Dobby. “I'm sorry but I can't meet with you any longer, I have to pack up and get ready.”

“Dobby understands,” the house elf said with a nod. Dobby popped out and reappeared in a large French Chateau and in front of Harry Potter sir's soon to be newest employee.

“May I 'elp you?” Fleur asked. “Are you looking for your master?”

“Dobby is here on behalf of his master,” Dobby replied.

“Oh?” A perfect eyebrow raised in reply.

“Dobby's master is the great and powerful Harry Potter sir,” Dobby said proudly, “the greatest and most powerful wizard that ever lived.”

“I see.” The immaculate eyebrow slowly lowered. “What can I do for dear 'arrie?”

“Harry Potter sir needs a financial advisor to help Harry Potter sir deal with Harry Potter sir's finances.”

“I'd be 'appy to assist dear 'arrie,” Fleur said in delight.

“Dobby has a contract right here.”

Fleur hesitated for a second before signing the contract. Long experience and business with the goblins had taught her never to take any contract at face value and to examine every clause and sub

clause carefully before even thinking about signing it. On the other hand, she didn't think that 'arrie would ever try to cheat her.

"The contract, it is signed." She said pompously. "I will need to examine 'arrie's records immediately."

"Dobby will get Harry Potter's records," Dobby agreed.

"I will also need a copy of the contract," Fleur said quickly before the elf had a chance to leave.

"Here you go." Dobby snapped his fingers and produced a copy.

"Thank you." Fleur picked up the contract and began reading through it as the house elf disappeared. A few minutes into it her eyes bulged and her jaw tightened as she got to one particular section.

Dobby returned to the Delacour residence and was immediately confronted by an enraged quarter Veela screaming in french and waving a contract.

"Dobby is sorry Dobby does not understand French."

With a sigh of disgust, the girl grabbed Dobby by the collar and frog marched him down the hall and into a small room containing another young girl in a maid's outfit sipping a cup of coffee. After a few minutes of heated French, the maid turned to Dobby with an odd look on her face.

"She says that she'd angry that you haven't offered her a position servicing Harry Potter."

"What does little scary girl wish to do?" Dobby asked.

"She says that she's already drawn up a contract," the maid said, "and just needs your stamp."

"What is a mistress?" Dobby asked with a confused look on his face.

"Someone who keeps the master of the house relaxed," the maid said with a giggle.

"Harry Potter sir needs to be very relaxed," Dobby said firmly, "thank you scary small girl."

"She says that you're welcome," the maid relayed. "That's all she wanted, but I want to know something."

"What is it?"

"Do you have any openings for a maid?" She asked hopefully.

"Dobby will do all the cleaning," the little elf said firmly.

"That's not quite the duty I had in mind," the maid said frankly.

"Oh?"

"Nope, this costume doesn't help me clean at all. Only reason I wear it here is because it's a term of my employment," she explained, "if I were to work for you boss then the only housework I'll be doing is polishing his wand if you know what I mean."

"Dobby understands the importance of proper wand care," the house elf said seriously, "maid is hired."

"Wonderful," the girl said with a grin, "I also took the liberty of filling out my own contract."

"Dobby thinks that everything seems to be in order," the house elf said with a nod, "Dobby has to go clear some pests out of one of Harry Potter sir's houses now."

Not more than ten minutes later, the doors of the former Malfoy Manor house flung open to eject a dirty blond bastard.

"What are you doing you stupid elf?" Lucius screamed as Dobby flung him out the front doors of the former Malfoy Manor.

"Dobby is clearing pests out of Harry Potter sir's house," the house elf replied, "former mistress Cissy can stay."

“Thank you . . . Dobby right?” Narcissa asked. No way in hell was she gonna get thrown out into the cold and away from her clothes. “What prompted this generosity.”

“Harry Potter sir needs many mistresses to keep him calm,” Dobby explained.

“Oh . . . well, I guess the boy is attractive in a waifish sort of way and there's also the fact that Lucius hasn't been able to get it up in years . . .”

“Narcissa,” Lucius squealed, “you can't be considering it.”

“There's nothing to consider,” Narcissa said with a cultured smile, “I'd be happy to take the position . . . or any position the boy wants me to take. They're quite eager to try new things at that age you know.”

AN: House elves are fun to write.

Disclaimer: Expanded 'A Different Triwizard' from chapter 48 of 'Odd Ideas.'

Go Tell The Spartans

"Wands out?" Cedric asked.

"I think we'd better check something first," Harry replied. "Grab the trophy."

"What good do you think that will . . ."

Cedric reappeared back at Hogwarts in front of a surprised crowd. "We've got to go back for Harry," he shouted. "Aurors, where are the bloody Aurors."

"Calm yourself Mr. Diggory and tell us what has happened," Dumbledore advised.

"The cup was a trap," Cedric said breathlessly. "Harry's still there, we've got to go back for him."

"Portkey's used up it's magic," Moody advised.

Hufflepuff Common Room, several months earlier . . .

"Quiet," Cedric growled at one of his house mates. He was sick and tired of hearing people insult Hogwarts' other champion. "Let me ask you something, why do you think Harry would have put his own name in the bloody cup?"

"Well . . . he's a Gryffindor," the other student said lamely.

"And we all know they're glory hounds right?" Cedric asked. "Let's start with his first year, we all know what happened right? Well, who's heard Harry talk about what happened?"

"I asked him once," Susan volunteered. "He just sort of . . . shrank, said he didn't want to talk about it."

"Then let's look at his second year," Cedric continued. "Anyone hear Harry's version of what happened?"

"We were talking about it after Harry got out of the hospital wing," another student said slowly. "Harry heard what we were talking about and turned around, I . . . I don't think he's ever told anyone what happened."

"His third year he had a murderer after him and he kept getting attacked by the bloody dementors," Cedric sighed. "And I've never heard two words from him about what he's done. Accept it, Harry's not a normal Gryffindor. He's someone who's actually brave, not the usual dregs the house attracts."

"Bloody loyal to those friends of his too," Hanna said. "You realise what that means? It means he's a Hufflepuff at heart, hat got blinded by his bloody lack of fear."

"So you know what I think this is?" Cedric's voice raised. "Based on what we know of Harry's history, I don't think it's likely that he put his name in for the glory, I don't think it's likely he put his name in at all. We all saw how dangerous the first task was, I think that someone is trying to use this tournament to murder Harry Potter. They failed in first year, they failed in second, and they failed in third. Maybe they think the fourth time's a charm?"

"It's our duty to help him as a fellow Hufflepuff," Susan said with a smile. "Sod the bloody hat, what's it know? We all know what house Harry belongs in."

Cedric gave the girl a grateful nod. "Exactly, who's with me?"

The cheer that greeted his words deafened the room.

IIIIIIII

Harry's first indication that something had changed came when he walked into the great Hall to find a large sign above the Hufflepuff table proclaiming that they supported Harry Potter, Hogwarts' youngest champion.

"Wasn't us Harry," Fred said in response to Harry's questioning look.

"No trick Harry," Cedric said with a grin. "Just took a little while for some of us to realize that you're one of us. No matter which one of us takes the cup, it'll still be a victory for Hogwarts right?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed.

"And a victory for Hogwarts is a victory for Hufflepuff House," Cedric finished with a smile. "Besides, you didn't even want to compete did you? It's not fair to blame you for the latest weird thing to happen in your life."

"Thanks Cedric."

"Just remember to duck when the bad guys reveal themselves," Cedric joked. "Wouldn't want that famous luck of yours to disappear at the wrong time would we?"

"Bad guys?"

"Someone's behind this," Cedric said with a shrug. "And they're not after me, be careful Harry."

"I will Cedric," Harry agreed. "I'll be careful." And I'll do my best to keep you out of it, he added in his mind. It was his fight, Harry didn't want anyone else to get caught up in it.

"Thanks Harry," Cedric said with a grin.

"Looks like the Puffs found their common sense," Fred said conversationally.

"Guess we'll have to cancel a few things we had planned," George agreed.

"What a waste," Fred sighed. "A shame we can't just move it to Slytherin table."

"Why can't we?"

"Too predictable."

"There's always the staff table," Harry interjected.

“Harry?”

“Bloody hell, the next time you get an idea for one of our pranks-”

Harry looked down at his feet in shame.

“-you bring it to us without delay. A crime to have a mind like that without telling us.”

|||||

Fleur carefully considered the information she'd received on a possible plot to kill the youngest contestant for a few days before deciding to seek confirmation.

“May I speak with you?”

“What is it Fleur?” Cedric asked nervously.

“Do you really this is all a plot to kill 'arrie?” The French champion's eyes flashed.

“I do,” Cedric agreed.

“I see,” the French girl muttered as she walked off, “merci Cedric.”

|||||

Harry lingered a bit in the charms classroom after class ended, hoping to get a word with the diminutive head of Ravenclaw House.

“May I help you with something Mr. Potter?” Flitwick asked.

“Yeah,” Harry agreed, “I was hoping you could give me some advise on something.”

“Oh?” The Professor asked with a curious smile. “On what?”

“Could you recommend a book on dueling?” Harry asked in a rush. “For the tournament I mean.”



"You think one of the tasks is going to be a duel?" Filius was intrigued by the notion.

"That or a free for all," Harry said quickly, "I just wanted to know where I could find a book to deal with one or more opponents."

"I'll write you a list," Flitwick agreed, "and give you a permission slip for the restricted section."

"Thank you Professor."

"Not at all Mr. Potter."

Harry rushed to the library and forced himself to flip through some of the books that Flitwick had recommended. As he'd suspected, it wasn't encouraging. There did not appear to be any way that he could defeat a large group of Death Eaters and that tidbit of information caused Harry's plans to mutate.

"One would not think so, but the advantage is with a lone skilled man when facing more than three equally skilled attackers." With a smile he reread the passage again and again. "And when a man is surrounded on all sides by enemies and has not a friend to watch his back, he has a greater advantage still. For they must be careful, lest they commit the sin of fratricide; while he is in a world of targets just waiting to be serviced." Harry continued studying and picked up one further gem of information that day. "When a man with a knife faces a man with a sword, the man with a knife must get inside the guard of the man with the sword." Harry yawned, he'd get back to his studies after he got some rest.

IIIIIIII

The months passed and the four contestants gathered to complete their final task.

"Come ere Arrie," Fleur said with a playful smile.

"What is it Fleur?" Harry asked nervously.

"A kees," the part Veela said as he lips brushed against his cheek.  
"For luck, tu will need it to beat me Arrie."

"T . . . thanks," Harry stammered.

"Tu are welcome 'Arrie," she replied. Fleur noted the lip marks on the boy's cheek with a satisfied smile.

Things proceeded as they had a hundred times in a hundred universes leaving Harry and Cedric looking nervously around a cemetery.

A calm smile appeared on Harry's face as he took stock of the situation. It had been impossible not to hear the rumors, impossible to come to the same conclusion as so many others had. The contest was another murder attempt, Harry had decided months before that no one else was going to be caught up in his fight.

"Wands out?" Cedric asked.

"I think we'd better check something first," Harry replied. "Grab the trophy."

"What good do you think that will . . ."

Harry allowed himself a brief moment of pleasure at the shocked look on Cedric's face as the portkey activated. "I was hoping so," he muttered to himself. "You were right Ced, but it's between me and them. You've got no place here."

IIIIIIIIII

Amelia knew that something was wrong the moment the two contestants disappeared. Most of Hufflepuff house had written their parents, siblings, and former housemates requesting that they come and provide a bit of moral support to the two Hogwarts champions.

"Aurors to me," Amelia called out. The fact that the extra people contained a large number of personnel from the DMLE was nothing more than a coincidence and no member of Hufflepuff house would

have said different if asked. "Get over there and see if you can track that portkey."

"Yes boss," her aid agreed while a member of Amelia's protective detail went off to collect young Susan.

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Cedric reappeared back at Hogwarts in front of a surprised crowd. "We've got to go back for Harry," he shouted. "Aurors, where are the bloody Aurors."

"Calm yourself Mr. Diggory and tell us what has happened," Dumbledore advised.

"The cup was a trap," Cedric said breathlessly. "Harry's still there, we've got to go back for him."

"Portkey's used up it's magic," Moody advised.

"Go see if Amelia is willing to come over here," Dumbledore ordered, "she's not one of us but she's loyal to the light."

"Right," Moody agreed. "Bad business this," Moody said as he walked up to the group of his former colleagues.

"Worse then the time at that place," Amelia agreed.

"Heh." Moody gave a rasping laugh. "Glad to see you here Amelia."

"Stupefy," Amelia incanted quickly, "take that man into custody."

"Right boss."

"What is the meaning of this?" Dumbledore roared.

"That is not Mad Eye Moody," Amelia replied. You didn't partner up with the paranoid bastard without having to learn dozens of signs and countersigns. "As you bloody well should have known, or didn't he trust you enough to give you a few dozen recognition signs?"

"I . . ." Dumbledore started to speak but was interrupted by one of the younger Aurors.

"Tests positive for Polyjuice," the Auror shouted.

"I want three on him at all times," Amelia ordered, "and I want you to find out everything he knows. I'm authorizing you to use whatever means necessary. We are going to do whatever we need to do in order to get young Mr. Potter back here safely."

"Amelia please," Dumbledore protested. The old man was horrified at the feral looks that had appeared on the faces of the Aurors at the pronouncement. "I want to get Harry back more than anyone but . . ."

"Shut up," Amelia snapped, "or I'll have you removed from my crime scene." The look of hero worship that appeared on her niece's face almost brought a smile to Amelia's. "Now Cedric, what happened?"

"Harry told me to grab the trophy," Cedric replied, "I asked him what good that would do and the portkey activated again. You have to go back for him."

"We're trying to do just that," Amelia said calmly, "well?"

"We're on it boss," one of the Aurors replied, "be just a couple more minutes."

"Got one of the other contestants here boss," another Auror said, "couldn't find the Frenchy but we got Krum. Shows signs of Imperio."

"You know anything?" Amelia asked abruptly.

"Nosssing," Victor replied, "haf you vound Harry?"

"We're still working on it," Amelia replied with a frown, "get him to a healer."

"Got it boss," the Auror agreed.

"I've got the trace."

"Get me a large Portkey to the area," Amelia ordered, "volunteers." She was immediately surrounded by eager Aurors.

"Would you be willing to take me?" Dumbledore asked with a look of hope on his face.

"Fine," Amelia agreed. "Come on." The sickly smell of ruptured intestine greeted the rescue party when they arrived in the Riddle family cemetery. "Spread out."

"Uh . . . boss," Tonks called out, "I think you need to take a look at this."

"What is . . . Albus," Amelia called out, "come over here and tell me this is what I think it is." She looked down at the corpse of the Dark Lord with a frown. "And why it's here now."

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Cedric's hands were shaking as he waited for the Aurors to return. Why hadn't he realized that the trophy was a portkey? He thought to himself, because of his stupidity Harry had been left to face things himself. Cedric's head shot up when Dumbledore returned with a small escort of Aurors.

"Did you find Harry?" Cedric demanded.

"We found a war zone," one of the Aurors replied. "Boy put of one hell of a fight."

"We haven't . . . identified Harry yet," Dumbledore said sadly. "I haven't given up hope that he might have escaped."

The tight looks on the Auror's faces was enough to tell Cedric the truth, his friend was dead.

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Amelia was waiting when then Aurors she'd ordered to escort Albus Dumbledore returned with a worn looking Mad Eye Moody.

"Good to see you, ya old bastard." She said with a grin.

"Still can't believe they let a bitch like you become the Director," Moody replied, "still say they couldda found better without too much trouble." He noted with approval the angry looks on the Auror's faces at his slight towards their boss.

"Good to see the real you Mad Eye."

"Good to be the real me Amelia," Moody replied, "and it took you bloody long enough."

"Why the hell didn't Dumbledore notice that you weren't yourself?"

"Says he thought all my precautions were just mindless paranoia," Moody replied, "and dinna bother noting all the problems with my impostor's performance. Never guess who it was."

"Later," Amelia said reluctantly, "I need you to take a look at the crime scene."

"What me to reconstruct things then?"

"If you can," Amelia agreed. "We think they arrived here."

"And you let a dozen of these clumsy bastards tramp all over it," Moody growled. "Let's see . . . boy got grabbed here and taken over this way. Blood on the ground indicates something bad happened here."

"We've got someone from the Department of Mysteries working on it," Amelia supplied, "thin it's some sort of ritual." She bent down and pulled a tarp off a lump. "Explains this thing anyway."

"Bloody hell," Moody gasped.

"What happened next?"

IIIIIIII

A relaxed smile bloomed on Harry's face as he looked over the Death Eaters that had assembled on their master's command. A strange

calm had overtaken him when he realized that there was no way he was going to live to see the sun rise the next day and Harry's resolve hardened, if he was going to die then Harry decided that he was going to send as many of them to hell before following himself.

"CRUCIO." Voldemort cast the spell on his nemesis to get the boy into the proper frame of mind to begin the duel.

|||||

"What do you think Mad Eye?" Amelia asked. "How many did the boy take with him?"

"Half a dozen more then we found on the ground I'd guess," Moody said with a frown, "maybe more an maybe less."

"How'd he do it?" One of the Aurors asked in a voice filled with awe.

"He didn't," Moody replied. "Boy was smart, he closed the distance, got in with the bastards, and let 'friendly fire' take care of the rest."

"Wouldda made one hell of an Auror," Amelia sighed, "you have enough to figure out what happened?"

"I think so." Moody agreed, he walked over to a rough patch of ground. "Boy got hit with a couppla Crucios here . . ."

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Harry felt his teeth crack as he bit down to keep the bastards from getting the satisfaction of listening to his screams. He knew pain, one might say it was an old friend, Harry was it's master and he would not allow himself to show how much it hurt.

"Shall we begin our duel?" Voldemort asked with a silky smile as he tossed the boy his wand.

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"How do you know?" Amelia asked reluctantly. It was her least favorite part of the job, despite years of work in the field she was still horrified at what humans would inflict on one another.

"Jest a guess," Moody replied, "look at the way he tore at the ground . . . poor kid was in a lotta pain."

"Oh." Amelia closed her eyes and took a deep breath. "Proceed."

"From here he got his wand somehow and managed to get back on his feet. From there he ran into the crowd," Moody said as he retraced Harry's steps, "they did some dueling."

IIIIIIII

"Bow Potter," Voldemort hissed, "bow and let us begin our duel."

"Go to hell Tom," Harry spat.

"CRUCIO," the enraged Voldemort incanted.

Harry was waiting for it, he dove out of the way and sprinted into the crowd of Death Eaters and in a flash, Harry was among them stabbing and hexing in every direction. He allowed a brief smile to grace his face as a curse flew over his head and impacted one of the Death Eaters; Harry was surrounded by targets, his foes had to watch for friendly fire. "Reducto." While he was under no such restrictions.

"Kill him," Voldemort screamed, "don't let him get away." At the Dark Lord's order, the curses turned a uniform green as the air filled with killing curses. "Stop hi . . ." Voldemort toppled to the ground with a look of surprise on his face as a sickly green curse hit him in the side.

IIIIIIII

"Is that when Voldemort got hit?" Amelia asked.

"I'd guess so," Moody agreed, "some where around that time anyway less he had another reason to stay where he was. They had a running fight up to here." He looked down at what had once been a large mausoleum.



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Harry knew the fight was over when a lucky hex destroyed his left leg. Under normal circumstance and considering the level of healing possible in the magical world, it wouldn't have been more than a painful injury. In a fight to the death, well . . . as they say, speed is life. With his good arm, Harry managed to drag himself behind a monument to one of Tom's more . . . ostentatious ancestors.

Closing his eyes, Harry took a moment to regain his center. He was a Potter, and Potters did not flinch when faced with death . . . well, he didn't think so anyway. The only examples he had to hold up were those of his parents.

"This is it," he mumbled to himself, "one last chance to take a few with me."

"Line up," he heard one of the surviving Death Eaters scream, "he can't stop us all."

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"And the poor kid got hit, serious enough to make him lose his mobility. Blood trail indicates that he was able to drag himself back here." Moody shook his head. "The bastards choose to get smart, lined up and hexed the hell out of his cover until there was nothing left."

|||||||

Harry didn't even bother trying to raise a shield to stop the wall of curses heading towards his meager cover, choosing instead to fling a few of his own back at his attackers in hopes of scoring a lucky hit.

|||||||

"No hope then?" Amelia dreaded the reply.

"Not unless the boy had a portkey or something like that."

"I see . . . thank you Mad Eye."

"Hell of a way to come out of retirement," Moody sighed, "and a hell of a way for a child to die. Least he didn't go alone." Moody reached down and picked up a charred piece of wood. "We'll have to get Ollivander to identify it."

"Gather up all the dirt," Amelia snapped at one of the junior Aurors. She indicated the site of Harry's last stand with a wave of her arm. "Bag it and get it to forensics."

"Yes Madame Bones," the confused underling agreed.

"Wanna give the coffin some weight do you?" Moody asked softly.

"Pall bearers always get antsy when the remains aren't heavy enough," Amelia replied. "It feels more honest if we do our best to scrape up what's left."

AN: I was going to write more of this but that seemed like a good stopping point. If you want to believe that Harry survived then figure that Fleur arranged to have him saved to repay his rescue of her sister, the kiss had something magical that allowed her to track him or transport him or something.

Omake: Never did see that movie but . . .

"This is madness Potter," Snape sneered.

"No," Harry disagreed. "THIS . . . IS . . . HOGWARTS." With that pronouncement, Harry kicked Snape into the bottomless pit.

"Where'd that pit come from?" Ron whispered to Hermione.

"Honestly Ron," Hermione whispered back. "According to 'Hogwarts a History,' that pit has been there since the time of the founders. Besides, Harry's always throwing people down it . . . you know that."

"Oh . . ." Ron scratched his chin. "Right . . . what do you suppose dinner will be?"

Omake by rijlkent

Harry didn't even bother trying to raise a shield to stop the wall of curses heading towards his meager cover,

That 'wall' of curses impacted his cover and the ground before and around it, and the resulting explosion produced a Shockwave of compressed air that pushed Harry up and away from the shrapnel also produced.

Harry awoke to hear the tail end of Moody's analysis. His shout for help was overshadowed by multiple apparition cracks as the Auror teams left the site. With no energy left to shout again, Harry quietly, but emphatically, exclaimed, "Bugger."

Disclaimer: Have a few more parts of this, stuck on a few small parts before making it a full fledged story. Part III of Reunion, first two parts are in chapters 56 and 60.

### The Slytherin Curse

While the group of time travelers rode the train to Hogwarts, Dumbledore was having a very difficult conversation in his office.

"Thank you for meeting with me Amelia," Dumbledore said as he waved the woman towards a chair, "lemon drop?"

"Why thank you Albus." She pocketed the candy with a mental note to pass it along to forensics. "Now then, what can I do for you?"

"I'm sure you've noticed the large number of accidents befalling several of our alumni?"

"You're speaking of the so called 'Curse of Slytherin' right?"

"Yes," Dumbledore agreed, "I have reason to believe that either one person or a small group is responsible."

"Do tell?"

"And I would like you to investigate this," the Headmaster continued, "hopefully we can put an end to this before there are more senseless deaths."

"I'm afraid that I'm going to have to turn down your request Albus," Amelia said sweetly, "I just don't have the resources to waste on what could be a wild goose chase . . . unless of course you have proof?"

"No . . . no proof," Albus admitted reluctantly, "but surely you realize that there are too many incidents to be attributed to coincidence?"

"Surely I don't care enough about the fates of Death Eaters to act without proof," Amelia said happily, she would treasure the look on the old bastard's face for the rest of her life. "You've always been a big believer in second chances Albus. That is why you arranged for a

multiple murderer to turn states' evidence after all . . . how is Severus doing anyway?"

"Still teaching," Dumbledore said sourly.

"Just think of this as a chance to give whoever is behind the Slytherin Curse . . . assuming they exist, a second chance. Or a third . . . or fourth . . . if that doesn't work for you then think of it as a chance to round out your teaching staff with another multiple murderer, be a good change to have a competent Professor in Defense. One more thing Albus."

"What is it Amelia?" Dumbledore asked with an annoyed sigh.

"If Susan comes to harm due to your actions or due to those of your pet Death Eater then I will kill you," she said in a cold voice. "Him too," she added absently. "There won't be a place on Earth that either of you can hide from me."

"I hardly think that's necessary Amelia I . . ."

"Don't patronize me," Amelia snapped. "I'm well aware of the fact that you're hiding something in this school, if my niece comes to harm because of it or due to any one of your little decisions then you will die. Am I making myself clear Albus?" She asked sweetly.

"Crystal."

"Then have a good day Albus," she said as she showed herself out, "I enjoyed our little conversation so much that I believe we'll have to do it again some time."

"I'm afraid that with the coming session, I doubt that I'll have the time . . ."

"That wasn't a request Albus," she interrupted, "unless you want me to up the security around Susan. I think five Aurors within two meters of her at all times will be sufficient."

"As I was saying," Dumbledore said tightly, "I doubt I'll have the time to have too many meetings. But I'll try to keep my schedule open."

"Thank you Albus," Amelia said as she walked out the door, "I really appreciate that."

|||||||

The first thing the group noticed when they walked into the Great Hall was the sheer number of students, almost twice the number then they remembered.

"What in the world?" Hermione muttered.

"Didn't you know?" Susan whispered. "In the old world only one in three muggleborn students lived long enough to receive their letter. It seems that they were especially prone to fatal accidents."

"Then Lucius Malfoy and a few of his friends suffer accidents and die," Luna chimed in, "and the number of accidents befalling muggleborn falls to almost zero. What an amazing coincidence?"

"Isn't it though," Hermione agreed. "I also notice that there aren't very many students in Slytherin," Hermione mused, "and that most of those are in the upper years."

"Slytherin Alumni tend to die in horrific ways," Susan said, "families tell their children to beg the hat to keep them out of it. It's funny but most of the Slytherins in the here and now are muggleborn."

"That's priceless," Hermione giggled. "I know what house I'm going to be in."

"Me too," Harry agreed, "less of a commute." Harry's eyes turned to the sneering head of his future house.

"And much more space," Luna chirped, "I'll bet we could have private rooms if we wanted."

"Good point," Susan agreed. No way she was going to be stuck alone with a bunch of brats in another house. "It's agreed then?"

"Agreed," the others chorused.

|||||||

"Isn't he a little charmer," Aurora Sinistra said, elbowing her neighbor.

"Isn't whom?" Minerva asked.

"The one with Lily's cheekbones," Aurora whispered, "surrounded by girls."

"Not sure where he got that from," Minerva mused, "James thought girls were icky until some time in his fourth year."

"Forgot about that," Aurora giggled, "you know me and Augusta once cornered him in a classroom and kissed him. Went to Poppy and demanded she re-grow his lips."

"When was that?"

"Middle of our first year."

"Ah yes," Minerva sighed, "after Poppy wouldn't help James had Mr. Lupin brew up a potion to cure the problem . . . I believe the house elves finally managed to get the smell out last year."

"Shame Lils isn't around to see this," Aurora sighed, "she had Harry's whole life planned out for him within a week of his birth. Right down to where he'd have his wedding."

"Lily and her lists," Minerva said wistfully, "what did she finally decide on?"

"Coast of Dover," Aurora said after a moment of thought, "with two or three other choices if Harry or his future wife didn't like Dover."

"Shame the accidents didn't start until a couple years ago," Minerva observed tightly, "shame I didn't arrange a few myself. If I'd have known that Sirius . . . I'm sorry Aurora."

"No," Aurora said with an angry frown, "I agree with you. If I knew then what he'd do I'd have killed him myself."

"Excuse me," Minerva said. She stood up and began reading off names, pausing just a bit before calling out Harry's name. "Potter, Harry."

Harry walked up to the Hat and calmly plopped it on his head.

"Slytherin," the Hat said loudly. The room was silent as Harry placed the Hat back on the stool and calmly strolled over to rejoin his friends.

Minerva quickly overcame her surprise and finished the sorting before taking her seat beside the Astronomy Professor. "I didn't expect that," Minerva said in shock. "James would have been beside himself."

"Until he realized that Harry got the Hat to sort him into Slytherin to stay with his little girlfriends," Aurora said between bouts of giggles, "then he would have been so proud he'd have burst. Talking about the Potter charm and how Harry was a chip off the ol'block."

"Well . . . I guess that's true," Minerva agreed as she watched the four students speak with each other. "He had to give up his dream of having a harem in his fifth year after all so I suppose he'd be happy to live his dream through his son."

"Sixth year," Aurora corrected, "after Lily threatened to cut off his 'best friend' if he didn't. Do you really think little Harry's building himself a harem?"

"Of course not," Minerva said quickly, "but that wouldn't have prevented James from bragging about it."

"True, James never did let inconvenient facts ruin a good story."

IIIIIIII

"Why do they keep looking at us?" Harry said nervously. Years of hunting the most dangerous prey in the world had left Harry acutely aware of the fact that he was being watched.

"Who knows," Hermione said with a shrug, "don't be so paranoid Harry."



"It's not like they can listen in," Susan agreed, "I cast a spell on the train to keep people from being able to monitor our conversations. Even if they can lip read all they'll get is a conversation about ponies."

"Ponies?"

"I like Ponies," Luna offered.

"Couldn't you have a manlier conversation?" Harry asked.

"Little girls talk about ponies," Susan said confidently, "not manly things."

"They do?" Hermione asked in surprise.

"I'm fairly sure they do," Susan agreed uncertainly. "Don't they?" Three bewildered looks met her question. "I guess we'll have to research that then," Susan said, "to make it more realistic."

IIIIIIIIII

"Madame Bones, another pureblood has died of the curse."

"Who?"

"The Lestrangle family," the Auror replied, "well . . . every member we know about anyway."

"What happened?" Amelia asked mildly.

"Augusta Longbottom and Moody discovered them in their cell," the Auror said with a straight face, "they were going to visit Sirius Black to ask him why he betrayed the Potter family and the guard accidentally took them to the wrong cell."

"Do tell?" Amelia purred. "And we're sure that Augusta Longbottom and Moody didn't decide to . . . I don't know, get a bit of unofficial justice?"

"No evidence to support that theory," the Auror replied with a grin, "Moody even testified under Veritaserum that they didn't do it and that he did not witness Augusta Longbottom cast any spells."

"Guess that there's no reason to investigate," Amelia mused, "people die in Azkaban all the time. Dispose of the bodies and seal the file."

"Yes Madame Bones," the Auror agreed, "any way I should dispose of them?"

"Fire is always good," Amelia replied, "prevents the spread of disease."

"Understood Madame Bones," the Auror agreed.

Amelia sighed after the man had left, things were so much easier in the old days before she found out how the world was really run.

IIIIIIII

"These are your new quarters." The Prefect said sourly, he was one of the few purebloods in Slytherin House, a fact to which he owed his badge. "Boys on the right and girls on the left."

"Where are the . . ." Hermione began.

"Ask someone who gives a damn," the Prefect snapped. "Professor Snape is our Head of House and he's always happy to accept my recommendations on detentions."

"Fine," Hermione agreed. She waited until the boy had left before turning back to her friends. "Harry, I don't usually ask favors but . . ."

"He's going to hang himself," Harry interrupted, "stress of his position was too much for him."

"Thank you Harry," she said sweetly, her face fell as she continued, "I remember him from before . . . he was one of the ones who . . . Ron." she finished tightly.

"Oh." Harry smiled. "I guess he's going to botch the job then, you know if you make the rope just a hair too long then he'll be on his toes and it'll take most of the night before he finally goes. Any others that had a hand in what happened to Ron?"

"I think you got most of them," Hermione said as she wiped a couple tears off her face, "I'll make a list for you later."

"Thank you," Harry said, "could you also . . . all of you, take a look at everyone else at Hogwarts? I'd like to compare lists to make sure no one gets left out that deserves a place with the others." The three girls nodded in agreement.

"Speaking of not leaving anyone out. What were you planning to do about Sirius?" Susan asked. "I can't imagine that you'd forget about poor Peter."

"I'll think of something," Harry replied. "Peter has been spending most of his time behind the Weasley family wards or in Hogwarts so I haven't spent too much time thinking about the problem."

"I didn't think the Weasley family had anything special around their house?" Luna asked.

"They don't," Harry admitted, "but it's all tied to a ward that prevents entry to anyone that means harm to someone being protected by the wards. Fifteen minutes to bring down but then I'd have a whole new set of problems to deal with. Not sure if I could find Peter and set everything up before things went to pot."

"There's also the fact that Aunt Amelia would take notice if you ended up having to harm a member of the Weasley family or one of the responding Aurors."

"True," Harry agreed, "I'd also like him intact enough to confess. Not a major requirement but it'd be nice."

"And you can always kill him later," Luna said impishly.

"And I will just kill him later," Harry corrected, "great things come to those who wait."

"Well . . . I have things to arrange," Harry said with a fake yawn, "good night all."

"Good night Harry," Hermione said.

"Night," Susan echoed.

"Would you like a hand?" Luna asked serenely. "The seventh year boy's Prefect is someone I have an interest in seeing to."

"I don't remember him doing much?"

"Not until after you left the country," Luna explained, "I arrested him two years before we left."

"What'd he do?"

"He had a thing for muggle children," Luna continued, "committed suicide in his cell by bashing his head in with a rock."

IIIIIIII

Dumbledore walked into the Great Hall the next day with a grave look on his face. "May I have your attention please," he said loudly. "Thank you, due to unforeseen circumstance Potions Classes will be canceled today." He waited until the cheers died down before continuing. "Instead, Professor Snape says that there will be a quiz on everything in the first five chapters of your books tomorrow. Thank you." Ignoring the groaning students, Dumbledore left the Great Hall and walked to the Hospital wing.

"Good of you to join us Albus," Poppy said dryly.

"Did I miss anything?"

"We decided to wait until you got here to perform the Autopsies," Pomfrey replied. She led the group to a pair of tables and lifted up the sheets. Pulling out her wand she cast several diagnostic charms on the first corpse. "Male fifteen years of age, no sign of glamor or Polyjuice. Died of slow strangulation, appears to be self inflicted."

"Can you tell us anything else Poppy?" Dumbledore asked quietly.

"I could tell you several things if I chose to," Pomfrey agreed. "What sort of details did you want?"

"Was he under the effects of any spells or potions?"

"No sign that he was," Poppy replied, "I assume that Severus could do a more detailed blood work if he so chose. I have all the information I need."

"Thank you Poppy, Severus?"

"I'll do them both at once Headmaster," Snape agreed.

"Moving along," Poppy said as she directed her attention to the other body. "Subject is a male of about seventeen years, no sign of glamor or Polyjuice. Death is from injury to the spinal cord, appears to be the result of a fall. No signs of foul play."

"An accident and a suicide then?" Minerva asked.

"Seems to be," Poppy agreed as she put the sheets back over the bodies, "that's for the Aurors to decide. Bad luck having both happen on the first day of school."

"Bad luck and a Slytherin Curse," Aurora muttered under her breath.

"I found no signs that any magic was used on either of them prior to their deaths," Poppy said sharply.

"I'm sorry Poppy, that isn't what I meant."

IIIIIIII

"Is everything going to be alright?" Hermione asked after the Professors had left the Great Hall.

"Perfectly fine," Harry agreed, "didn't use a bit of magic."

"And Magical Law Enforcement is useless when it comes to non magical techniques," Luna chimed in, "take it from an Auror. Well, an Auror that stayed in after things got quieter anyway."

"Even then, we took the time to erase the signs that a good investigator would notice."

"Impossible to hide everything from the best," Luna said professionally, "something the DMLE doesn't have and I doubt that they'll be willing to call in the Yard on this."

"How long before you go after Snape and Dumbledore?" Susan asked.

"I'll give it a couple weeks for Snape," Harry said calmly, "Dumbledore isn't on my list . . . be happy to help one of you if he's on yours though."

"He's not? I'd have thought that after everything he did . . ." she trailed off.

"No doubting that the old man's an idiot," Harry agreed, "just not a malicious one. I kill evil people, not incompetents. Heh, you should have heard how he planned to defeat Voldemort."

"That bad huh?"

"Voldemort takes over, kills most of the muggleborn, and hits me with a killing curse."

"That's a victory plan?" Luna asked in shock.

"Admittedly, there were a few details I left out."

"Like what?"

"Hermione, R . . . Ron, and I tracking down a few soul fragments and living in a tent."

"That's his great plan?"

"I think old age might have been catching up with him," Harry explained, "that or he got dropped on his head a lot as a child."

"Any suggestions on how to deal with class?" Hermione spoke up. "Do we all act like children or do we go to the top of our year?"

"What do you think we should do DOCTOR Granger?" Susan asked sweetly. "Luna's a prodigy, you've got a PHD . . ."

"ABD," Hermione interrupted.

"Whatever," Susan waved it off as unimportant, "my Aunt is convinced that some brilliant but insane spell researcher has made me his heir and Harry is the 'bloody-boy-who-just-won't-bloody-die.' So tell me Hermione, what do you think would stand out more? Fitting in or running to the front of the pack?"

"When you put it that way," Hermione said with a blush.

"Besides," Harry said with a grin. "What's the fun in being normal? We didn't come back here to play things out the same as they did in the past, we came to shake things up a bit."

"Agreed," Luna said with a nod.

"Motion carries then?" Hermione asked. "Good, I don't think I could have survived being a normal student again."

"When were you ever normal?"

"Hush you."

IIIIIIIIII

"What about now Amelia?" Dumbledore asked the woman as she watched her Aurors go over through the dead student's possessions.

"Now I'm noting that I just saw a class four restricted artifact taken out of that trunk," Amelia said conversationally. "And wondering if you have any evidence to present to me?"

"You know, I can make your life very difficult if I chose to."

"And I can do the same to you," Amelia agreed, "it would quickly get very nasty and I suspect that both of us would end up retiring. As I've said before, if you want to investigate then do so with your own resources."

"You'll loan me a couple Aurors then?"

"If they want to work for you, they can do it in their own time. May we go off the record?"

"Certainly."

"Your word on it?"

"On my magic," Albus agreed as he made the oath.

"I find it hard to care about the deaths of a bunch of people that bribed their way out of Azkaban," Amelia said coldly, "I know you believe in second chances but there are some things in this world that can't be forgiven."

"Severus has shown . . ."

"That he has a Dark Mark," Amelia interrupted, "do you know what you need to do to get 'rewarded' with a Dark Mark? We had two undercover Aurors that got to that stage, they were both withdrawn before it came to that. There are better ways of getting information."

"I guess we'll have to agree to disagree then," Dumbledore sighed.

"For what it's worth Albus, I wish you the best of luck and I promise that I will act if you bring me proof."

"You just aren't willing to exert yourself."

"Not on their behalf," she agreed with a curled lip, "be honest with yourself Albus. There is nothing suspicious about either of these deaths. Of the suspicious ones, can you name one person who didn't deserve it?"

"Everyone deserves a second chance Amelia," Dumbledore maintained. "Even them."

"Do you know what the historic meaning of the word 'outlaw' is Albus?" Amelia tried a different track. "It is someone who has been deprived of the benefit and protection of the law. As far as I can tell, everyone of the 'dodgy' deaths has earned the title of outlaw and as such their deaths do not but fill me with joy."



"I see . . . what would it take for the use of your equipment and facilities?"

"The case files, forensic labs, and such?"

"Yes."

"My budget could use a bit of padding," Amelia mused, "but what I'd really like is a new prison. I really don't like having to depend on dementors."

"Agreed," Dumbledore sighed, "in return for the use of your equipment. I Albus Dumbledore agree to use my influence to give you a bit of padding to your budget to be used on new equipment, training, and to increase the number of Aurors."

"And the prison?"

"Is a task I agree with you on," Dumbledore said with a smile, "so no deal need be made. I will give you my support in that because I agree with you."

"We really must agree to have more conversations like this Albus," Amelia mused, "who knows what other common ground we might have."

"Doing anything on Sunday?"

"Nothing important, why?"

"I usually take tea around four if there aren't any emergencies that require my immediate attention," Dumbledore replied, "feel free to join me if you can make the time."

AN: Added the scene where Harry talks about Dumbledore because so many people speculated on the Headmaster's fate. Not too happy about how it came out, but then again I'm never very happy with the majority of my stuff.

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"Minerva?" Professor Vector asked, "Why do those girls keep saying, 'I wanna ride the pony Daddy!'" "The way they're talking reminds me of those, uh, special pensive episodes."

"Yes, quite evocative. Do you suppose some upper years are pranking them... Or us?"

Disclaimer: Rather short I think.

## Accidents Will Happen

Harry walked into the Hospital wing with an amused expression on his face, marking it one of the few times that he'd entered without needing treatment.

"You called for me Madame Pomfrey?" Harry asked politely.

"Yes I did," the school nurse agreed with an uncomfortable look on her face, "it seems that Ms. Lovegood has suffered an . . . accident I believe the Headmaster called it."

"And what do you call it?" Harry demanded, his face could have been chiseled out of stone.

"An attack," she replied with a frown, "it seem that she decided not to put up with the treatment that she'd been subjected to before."

"And Dumbledore says that it was an accident?"

"He says that he does not believe that the intended for things to go so far," Poppy said with a frown of distaste, "Ms. Lovegood has been asking for you."

"Would you deliver a message to the Head of Ravenclaw House for me please?"

"Yes of course," she agreed quickly.

"From this moment on, I will regard any attack on Luna Lovegood as an attack on myself and I will react accordingly. If the person or persons that perpetrated this attack are not dealt with to my satisfaction within twenty four hours then I will deal with them myself."

"I will be happy to pass that along," Poppy said with a serene smile, "would you be so good as to sit with Ms. Lovegood until I return?"

"Of course Professor."

"Have her take the red potion in half an hour and the green ten minutes after that. I put her in your bed so . . . just walk away from me," she sighed as Harry abruptly turned and began walking towards Luna's bed. "It's okay Mr. Potter I understand," she said to his retreating back. "Now then, I wonder where my esteemed colleague from Ravenclaw House will be at this hour?"

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"Harry?" Luna croaked. "Are you there?"

"I'm here Luna," Harry said quickly, "just rest and focus on getting well. I'll take care of the rest."

"I wasn't strong enough," Luna said with tears flowing down her face, "I'm sorry, I made you look bad."

"You stood up to them," Harry said firmly, "that's all that matters."

"But I lost."

"Win or lose you stood up to them," Harry assured the girl, "that's all that matters."

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Poppy stared at the entrance to the Ravenclaw dorms with a look of annoyance on her face for a few seconds before making a strange gesture causing it to open. Most students would have been shocked to know that the entrance to every dorm would open to a staff member, she thought to herself, then again most students lacked the common sense needed to fill a thimble.

"Harry Potter has a message for you Filius," Poppy said as she entered the Ravenclaw Common room.

"Poppy?" Flitwick asked in shock. "What are you doing here?"

"Young Mister Potter is quite displeased by what happened to Ms. Lovegood," Poppy continued, "as am I."

"Accidents happen," Filius said with a shrug.

"Is that what the Headmaster told you?" Poppy growled. "That it was an accident?"

"Wasn't it?"

"No, it wasn't."

"Is she going to be alright?" Filius said in a tired voice. "I need to write to her father and I'd like to assure the man that his daughter will make a full recovery."

"She will," Poppy said simply.'

"Thank you," Filius said with a sigh of relief, "now what was Mister Potter's message?"

"He has placed Ms. Lovegood under his protection," she said, "and will regard any attack on Ms. Lovegood as an attack on himself. He also wanted me to tell you that if the perpetrators of this crime aren't dealt with to his satisfaction then he will deal with them himself."

"I see."

"And I suggest that you listen to him," she said coldly, "or I fear that there will be several more 'accidents' befalling members of Ravenclaw House."

"Please tell Mister Potter that they will be dealt with," Flitwick agreed, "harshly."

"Thank you for your time Filius."

"Any time Poppy."

IIIIIIII

Hermione and Ron were the first to arrive, they were followed by Ginny, and within a few minutes the entire 'Ministry Crew' had joined Harry by the side of Luna's bed.

By the time Poppy returned to the hospital wing, the ward played host to every student that accompanied Harry on his ill fated trip to the Ministry along with a large portion of his 'study group.'

"Professor," Hermione spoke for them all, "we would like to amend Harry's statement. He told you that an attack on Luna was an attack on him, please be sure that your colleagues know that an attack on one of us is an attack on us all."

AN: I was going to use this as a build up to another idea but this didn't really fit that, it did however seem to be a good stopping point for this mini fic.

Omake: Ego Trip

Life as an insanely rich adventurer isn't quite all it's cracked up to be, sure you get the satisfaction of knowing you saved the world, but that's all you get. You see, the public just doesn't want to know how close the Communist Mole Men (CMM) came to conquering the world. Or that the dinosaur riding nazis from the hollow earth were behind a scheme to get fluoride out of the public water system as part of their alliance with the cavity creeps. No the public doesn't want to know how close they get to oblivion every day, that's where there are men like me. Men who drag the monsters out from under the bed and then pistol whip them until they agree to go to Canada like they agreed to in the treaty. My name is classified, unimportant anyway. Some call me . . . Rorschach's Blot.

My head was pounding when I woke up, probably from the beating I'd taken on my last mission. Grey aliens had been using mind control drugs on Olympic boxers as part of a scheme to rig the fights to make Earth a softer target for the coming invasion and I'd had to disguise myself and enter the games to get to the bottom of things, I'd won the gold of course . . . it really wasn't fair to pit normal people against someone as amazing as I am, but they'd gotten in a couple good hits of their own which neatly explains my sore and aching head. It didn't explain why my hands were green, or why I appeared to be in a dark cave.

"What's wrong with you?" An odd voice demanded. "You're late for work."

“And what is work exactly?” I asked glibly. I turned around and found myself face to face with an unpleasant green being with pointed teeth.

“Your job is to go to every vault and remove our fees,” the 'goblin?' replied, “here's your skeleton key, here's the ledgers that you'll have to fill out, and here's a large sack to put the gold in.”

“Might I have two large sacks?” I asked plaintively.

“Fine,” the goblin growled, “though I don't know why you need more than one since they're bottomless.”

“One for the fees and the other for something else,” I replied, “why do you think?”

“Just get to work.”

For lack of anything better to do, I grabbed the ledger that the creature had given me and flipped through it for a few minutes until I came to a rather odd entry.

“Malfoy hmmm?” In a flash, everything became clear. I had somehow become a self insertion character. It wasn't the first time of course, I had often been called upon to pursue villains through all manner of alternate realities; dimensional travel was yet another thing the public would never know about. “Looks like I'm going to have to make a few withdrawals.”

I spent the rest of the day removing large amounts of gold from the vaults of several prominent wizards and witches. I figured it was owed to me since as a goblin I'd have a major handicap when it came to the traditional SI activity of building harems and saving the day. I spent the remainder of the time doctoring the ledgers, figuring that it would be easier to get Harry and the others on my side if there was evidence that certain people were robbing his vaults with goblin aid. I'd just have to explain that I was an honest . . . hmmm . . . I'd have to explain that it was in my interest to help them and why and they'd be stupid enough to trust me with everything, especially if I started things off by telling them that they couldn't trust me. It was odd; the more you told people that they couldn't trust you, the more they did.

AN: A variation on the SI I've written before.

OMAKE: Dual National

"So what did Professor Dumbledore want?" Hermione asked after Harry returned to the common room.

"Hmmm?" Harry snapped out of his daydream. "Oh, it turns out my mum was born in Canada while my grandparents were there on business."

"Oh, so nothing ground shattering then?"

"Nope," Harry agreed, "he also gave me a book on Canada and I'm thinking of going there after I'm finished with Hogwarts."

"To live or to visit?"

"To visit," Harry replied, "at least at first."

"Mind if I read that book?"

"Be my guest."

"Well then," Ron spoke up for the first time, "it's a good thing it wasn't anything bad eh' Hermione?"

"Right Ron," Hermione agreed.

"Now then . . . um Harry." Ron pointed at Harry's chest. "I." He pointed at his own. "Go to." He made his fingers walk. "Eat." Gestured shoveling something into his mouth. "Harry." Another point at Harry's chest. "Come." Best not write out what gesture he made here. "Too?" He held up three fingers and scratched his head.

AN: Bad, but it was all to write the last paragraph. I may write Harry the citizen of the northern resource area some day but it would be similar to my Irish Harry fic rather than this piece of drek.



Disclaimer: What if Sirius was five minutes earlier?

## Five Minutes

Five Minutes, three seconds, and several fidgety little units of measurement that only matter to people with IQs so large they forget how to tie their own shoes.

"I trust Hagrid," Dumbledore said, casually dismissing all of Minerva's well thought out and logical objections to his proposed course of action.

"Still," Minerva said with a frown, "I really don't think this is the sort of environment for a young wizard." She tried appealing to his emotions since reason and logic seemed to have failed.

"You must trust me to know what's best," Dumbledore said with a superior smile that actually made him look a bit constipated rather than the all knowing air he was going for. "ah . . . here comes Hagrid now."

"Evening Headmaster," Hagrid said nervously, wringing his leather riding cap in his hands.

"Let's see young Harry then," Albus demanded, wanting to put his ill conceived and poorly thought out... err, magic inspired plan into action.

"Errr . . . about that . . ."

IIIIIIIIII

Amelia awoke with a start to the feeling of someone twisting her arm into a painful lock. With a groan, she tried to twist free.

"It's me," a voice hissed in warning, "I don't want to break your arm but I will."

"Sirius?" Amelia gasped in surprise. "What are you doing?"

A quick twist removed the concealed wand holster on her arm and he tossed it out of her reach, along with the second wand she kept concealed inside her pillow.

"James and Lily are dead," Sirius said with a catch in his voice. He pulled up her sleeve to reveal a bare arm. "Swear on your magic that you don't support the Dark Bastard."

"What about Harry?" Amelia asked, still a bit groggy from being awakened so abruptly and focusing on her godson.

"Swear or so help me I'll . . ."

"I swear on my magic and on my life that I have no love for the so called Dark Lord Voldemort or any supporter of his cause." She felt Sirius's grip loosen as he sighed in relief. "What's going on Sirius?"

"Sorry Amy," he said, "I trust you but I had to be sure. I . . . I can't take any chances anymore."

"Harry's alive then?" She asked hopefully.

"I put him in the crib with Susan," Sirius replied, "I had . . . I'm sorry," Sirius seemed to collapse in on himself, all the anger that had been keeping him going gone, eclipsed by the pain of loss.

"It's okay Sirius," Amy tried to soothe her friend and former partner, "what happened?"

"The wards fell," Sirius said faintly, "I got there as fast as I could but I didn't get there in time to do any good. James . . . Lily, I . . . James held him off while Lily got ready."

"Got ready for what?"

"I don't know," Sirius said, "but she was able to defeat Voldemort before he could get to Harry."

"Voldemort's dead?"

"He's something," Sirius agreed, "I found his wand and robes in a pile of goo. Lily was between that and Harry's crib." Tears were streaming down his face as he told the story. "I gathered up Harry and came here as soon as I could, I didn't know where else to go."

"You're welcome here of course," Amelia assured him.

"I need you to look after Harry," Sirius said suddenly, "I'll tell the Goblins to give you access to my accounts."

"What?"

"I need to find Peter," Sirius said with a sigh, "either to . . . to give him a decent burial or to . . . to make a burial necessary." The strength of his emotions gave weight to his words.

"He was the secret keeper then?"

"And they either tortured it out of him or he gave it up willingly," Sirius agreed, "I'll either give him last rights and do my best to avenge him or I'll kill the bastard myself."

"Sirius . . ." Amelia looked at her friend for a few seconds. "Get a good night of sleep and we'll talk about it in the morning."

"Thank you Amy."

"What're friends for?"

The next morning, a number of units of time later that the author doesn't feel like keeping track of.

"Why me?" Amelia asked. "Why not another member of Dumbledore's little club?"

"Dumbledore is too focused on the big picture," Sirius said with a grin, "and any of the hard core Death Eaters like my cousin would go through the Order like it didn't exist."

"Why'd you join if you had such a low opinion of their capabilities?"

"When your name is Black," Sirius began, "you must be especially mindful of appearances if you don't want to be branded as a supporter of the Dark Lord."

Sirius got around the problem posed by the Death Eater's refusal to open his mouth by the simple expedient of shattering the man's front teeth and pouring the potion through the gap.

"Where is Peter Pettigrew?" Sirius demanded, as the DE's struggles slowed, the potion taking effect.

"I dun know," the DE lisped, bits of teeth and blood drooling down his chin.

"What do you know about Pettigrew?"

"He h'ng 'ound Potter, B'ack, and the werew'lf in ssschool," Sweat beaded the bastard's brow, as the act of remembering brought out what little fight he had left, to no avail, as his eyes lost focus once more.

"Damn it," Sirius sighed, "do you have any time sensitive information?" He asked, hoping to justify the gold he spent on the potion.

"Yeff," he smiled happily, drolling blood on his robe, the pain from the fight and its aftermath floating away with all his worries and cares.

"What," Sirius asked intently.

IIIIIIIIII

Alice Longbottom screamed as they cursed her again, her body was wrapped around her baby in an attempt to shield young Neville from their attackers. She could see Bellatrix's lips moving as the insane woman asked another question and could see those lips twist into an ugly frown when no answer was given. Frank kicked out, hoping to anger the woman so the curse would be directed at himself rather than his wife or young son.

"You'll get your turn," Bella crooned, "no need to be impatient." She turned back to the fallen woman with a crazed smile. "Cru . . ."

Bellatrix fell like a puppet with its strings cut and Alice would remember for the rest of her life the look of surprise on the woman's face as Bella's life blood escaped from a ragged hole in her chest.

Capitalizing on their shock, Sirius hit the Lestrangle brothers with a succession of lethal curses. Rabastan's head was reduced to a fine pink mist while Rodolphus suffered from a terminal case of shredded lungs and a fourth death eater learned how it felt to have a thumbnail sized piece of potassium appear in his nasal cavity.

"You okay Frank, Alice?"

"Sirius?" Frank asked weakly. "Bloody hell man, where did you learn those spells?"

"Shouldda seen what I'd have done if I was going all out," Sirius laughed, as he dismissed the ropes holding Frank in place, "one plus of membership in my family I guess."

"Lucky thing you were here," he continued after his wife nodded that the baby was unhurt.

"Luck had nothing to do with it," Sirius replied, "I took a prisoner and while he didn't know a thing about the location of my target . . ."

"He did have an idea of what was going to happen to us right?" Alice asked. "We owe you Sirius . . ."

"You don't . . ." Sirius began, trying to dismiss his actions as unremarkable.

"You saved our baby," Frank said firmly, iron in his voice, "we owe you."

Later, I'm not really sure when, just later, alright?!

"I'm sure you all have questions," Amelia said to the crowd of reporters, "so why don't we begin?"

"Is it true that Harry Potter defeated 'you-know-who' and blocked the killing curse?" One of the reporters asked.

"We have no indication of that," Amelia said with a chuckle, "I'm not sure where you heard that but you can be sure that it wasn't from someone that's had the opportunity to walk through the Potter home."

"Oh?" The reporter asked, surprised that her source was wrong. "Than what happened?"

"We had an Auror on the scene within minutes of the termination of the wards," Amelia began.

"When seconds count, the Aurors are only minutes away." One of the reporters whispered.

"Correct," Amelia said loudly, "which is why the Department of Magical Law Enforcement has always advocated Defense Classes for the public and raising the standards for Defense at Hogwarts. A position that you did not share in your last editorial. If I remember correctly you believed that we would be training the Death Eaters to be more effective? Not to mention your opposition to rapid response teams or your disapproval of changing priorities away from using resources to identify and penalize muggle born underage magic use to tracking the unforgivables. But that's a conversation for another day, we're talking about what happened at the Potter house." Amelia took a few moments to savor the pleasure of putting the reporter in his place. "As I was saying, our man was the first on the scene."

"Excuse me," the first reporter spoke up, "sorry to interrupt but could we have the Auror's name?"

"Not at this time," Amelia replied, "due to the sensitive nature of the work that he is engaged in, we are withholding his name for his own safety."

"Thank you Madame Bones," the reporter said, "please continue."

"From our investigations of the scene, it looks as if James Potter dueled the Dark Lord in an attempt to buy time for his wife to escape or to do whatever it is that she did." The reporters were furiously

scribbling in their notebooks. "After defeating and murdering James, the Dark Lord then confronted Lily Potter in the nursery where Lily managed to do something to defeat the Dark Bastard."

"So he's dead?"

"We aren't sure," Amelia admitted reluctantly, "we didn't find a body. We do know that whatever Lily did managed to hurt him enough to drive him away."

"What about young Harry?"

"He suffered a minor injury and he should make a full recovery," Amelia replied, "no more questions."

Later, just later . . .

"We've identified the fourth Death Eater," Amelia announced as she entered her boss's office.

"Who was it?" Crouch asked with a cruel smile.

"It was your son," Amelia said calmly, "I'm sorry I had to be the one to tell you."

"My . . . son?" Crouch looked like he was going to faint. "It . . . it can't be true."

"I'm sorry."

"Have you informed the press?"

"Not yet."

"Please do so," Crouch's eyes were squeezed shut as he gave the order.

"What should I tell them?"

"The truth would be a good place to start," Crouch growled.

"No, I mean . . . well. Lucius Malfoy is claiming that he was forced to be a Death Eater and was under the Imperius while he committed his crimes," Amelia explained, "who's to say your son wasn't also?"

"I . . . no," Crouch said with obvious reluctance, "thank you for the offer Amelia, but a man has to stand by his actions, good or bad."

Time for you to buy a damn watch, that's when!

"Look who's here," Amelia called out.

"Sirius," Harry squealed. The little boy ran out to greet his godfather with Susan close on his heels. "Did you bring us anything?"

"What kind of godfather would I be if I didn't bring you guys something," Sirius demanded. "Here you go, presents for everyone."

"Thank you Sirius," Susan said demurely.

"Yeah," Harry agreed without taking his eyes off the wrapped package in his hands, "thanks Sirius."

"Why don't you children go play with your new things while Sirius and I have a talk?" Amelia suggested. She waited until after the children had left the room before turning back to her friend. "Well?"

"Lost him in Istanbul," Sirius said, "but it wasn't a total loss."

"Oh?"

"Not sure he'll be able to use his right hand for a while," Sirius said with a grin, "and I doubt he can cast left handed."

"And the limp?"

"Lost a couple toes," Sirius admitted with a blush, "might be able to re-grow them."

"So what's the real reason you decided to come home?" Amelia asked. "It doesn't have anything to do with the black eye Narcissa Malfoy was sporting at the last St. Mungo's benefit does it?"



"I didn't know about that," Sirius said thoughtfully, "and for your information I was completely honest about my reasons for this visit." Sirius drew himself up to his full height and puffed out his chest, making a mockery of any claims he made.

"This time." She pursed her lips to hide a growing smile.

"This time," Sirius agreed, "however the state of Narcissa's eye does present us with an opportunity."

"What . . . your mother's death?"

"Makes me head of the family," Sirius said with a cruel grin, "making it more than appropriate for me to take offense at what has happened to my dear cousin."

"No one will give a damn about your actual reasons so long as appearances are maintained," Amelia added, "oh and the answer is yes."

"Huh?"

"You were going to ask me to be your second weren't you?" Amelia demanded. "You aren't cruel enough to leave me out of this are you?"

"I had thought to ask Andy," Sirius said with an embarrassed smile, "keeping things in the family so to speak."

"Bugger that," Amelia growled, "and bugger yourself if you think I'm not going to be a part of this."

"I'd hoped to have you as the judge," Sirius said quickly.

"Moody'll do," Amelia said with a grin, "or Crouch maybe. I'm sure we can lure either one of them out of retirement for this."

Look outside, it's daytime.

Sirius and Amelia arrived at the site of their duel with the scion of the Malfoy family just ahead of the judges.

"Their side isn't here yet?" Crouch asked as he and Moody arrived.

"Not yet," Amelia replied.

"Protocol says I have to ask you if you're sure about this," Crouch said with a bland look on his face, "and that there is no way that you can work out your differences."

"None I can think of," Sirius agreed cheerfully.

"That's what I thought," Crouch said with a grin, "so I won't bother with that part. I do want to say that despite my personal feelings, I will be scrupulously fair when it comes to judging this duel."

"Wouldn't have it any other way," Sirius said quickly, "when I kill him I want everything to be nice and legal."

"Looks like the other side has finally made their entrance," Moody interrupted. Two figures appeared on the other side of the field and one of them walked towards the small group. "Lucius and Snape," Moody pronounced. "Snape is the one coming this way."

"Severus," Sirius said with a grin, "so good to see you here."

"Black," Snape sneered, "it'll be a pleasure to get a chance to wipe that smirk off your face."

"And it'll be a pleasure to finish the job I started," Sirius retorted, "one must not leave business unfinished overlong."

"Lucius is going to burry you Black," Snape spat, "he promised me that he'll make you scream for mercy before allowing you to die."

"I think Lucius will find a full grown wizard a bit more challenging than a child or a helpless muggle," Sirius laughed, "tell him I don't fear cowards that hide behind a mask."

"Enough posturing," Crouch said sternly. "Does Mr. Malfoy wish to withdraw from the duel?"

"He does not," Snape replied.

"Fine, tell him to come over here and stand on his mark." Without a word, Snape whirled around and stormed back over to Lucius's side.

"Pity we can't get the grease ball too," Sirius said as he took his position. He raised his voice, "ready to begin cousin Lucius."

"Quiet," Crouch growled, "terms are death or surrender. You will begin when I shoot red sparks out of the tip of my wand. Understood?"

"Got it," Sirius said cheerfully.

"Understood," Lucius agreed.

"Is there anything either of you would like to state for the record before I start things off?"

"I want him checked for Polyjuice," Sirius said.

Lucius reddened at the calculated insult. "You dare suggest . . ."

"It is a valid request," Crouch interrupted, "Mad Eye."

"It's him," Moody pronounced after a couple quick charms.

"Satisfied?" Crouch asked.

"Very," Sirius said, "guess he didn't think of it this time."

"Alright then." He stepped back and raised his wand. "You may begin." A stream of red sparks shot out of his wand and the two combatants sprang into action.

"I think you're going to be in for a very unpleasant surprise cousin," Lucius sneered. His look of confidence disappeared along with his wand hand. "Wha?"

"Or not," Sirius said glibly as he shattered the other man's jaw. Another spell pulped Lucius left hand and the next two destroyed the arrogant man's knees. "Bit more difficult when your opponent can fight back isn't it?" Sirius asked. "Bit more difficult when you're not hiding behind a mask." Sirius's expression was blank as he brought

the tip of his wand in line with Lucius head. "Goodbye cousin, Reducto."

"Mad Eye," Crouch called out.

"Dead," Moody replied.

"Then I declare this matter resolved," Crouch said. He turned to Snape. "Unless you'd like to contest the result and challenge the victor?"

"No," Snape said, his face ashen.

"Come on Snivelous," Sirius crowed, "for old times sake."

Sometime after the first, but before the second.

"Sirius Black," Lockheart stammered. He well remembered his one attempt at stealing memories from the famous Dark Wizard hunter. "I didn't realize that you were a fan of my books."

"I'm not," Sirius said bluntly, "we're here to get the children their things for Hogwarts."

"Y . . . yes," Lockheart said quickly, "young Harry is entering his first year isn't he?" He withered under the man's flat stare. "I shall look forward to instructing them in Defense."

The second, as promised! I didn't say second what.

"Sirius please," Peter sobbed, "they'd have killed me . . . have mercy."

"Mercy doesn't live here," Sirius growled, lying through his teeth as he beheld the broken man before him, dead inside and in his own hell, but still breathing. With a wave of his wand, he ended the traitor

that was most responsible for the near extinction of the Potter family and offered a silent prayer for the death of his friend, who'd died on that long ago Halloween night with the Potters.

AN: Polish by SlickRCBD, and dogbertcarroll

Omake by meteoricshipyards

"This can't stand, Sue."

"I agree, Harry. Time to raise the Jolly Rogers."

Hermione looked confused. "Jolly Rogers? What does that have to do with what the Slytherins did?"

"The pirate flag that meant 'Surrender or die' was also called the Black Flag or the Skull and Crossbones. With us, it the Black and Bones," Harry explained, with a predatory smile.

"But you're Hufflepuffs! Hufflepuffs don't cause trouble!" the bushy haired witch said, slightly panicked when she saw the same smile on Susan.

"Oh, Hermione! I thought you were smarter than to fall for the propaganda," Susan said, still smiling. "But you'd be surprised at how much damage can be done when you have a lot of friends," she said, glancing at a group of 'Puffs walking together.

Omake by moshehim You are what you eat. No, that ain't right.

"Miss Bones, do you honestly expect us to believe that Lily Potter, a simple muggleborn, was able to kill the Dark Lord, the greatest wizard Britain has seen in many centuries?" asked the second reporter.

"I didn't say she killed him, we don't know that. But she certainly did something to him."

"But she's a muggleborn!"

"So?"

"So everyone knows they can't hold a candle against pure-bloods!" said the reporter.

"Really? To answer your second question, I don't expect you to believe anything, but with your stated belief in that unbiased pure-blood superiority stupidity and the editorials you wrote trying to

sabotage any effort the Ministry made to combat the Death Eaters, I'd say the DMLE might take a closer look into what you DO believe - and what you do about it. Other than that, let me just paraphrase an American... Wizard, you could say, by the name of Woody Allen. 'You can be Merlin himself, and still father a muggle. And you can be a squib, and still give birth to He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named.

"As you can clearly see, it is all about what YOU are born with, not what your parents were."

Disclaimer: Who reads these things?

## Lovegood's War

Every eye turned to the head table as Sybil stood up with a dazed expression on her face and began to speak in an oddly flat tone.

"The grease ball bastard shall betray the meddling old fool and the Dark Lord will start to win. All is not lost, for the one with the lightning bolt scar shall triumph in the end using a combination of kick ass magical powers and just general awesomeness. He will then pound the good loving moon like a jackhammer for weeks and months, sometimes in public . . . the good loving moon will get pounded by the one with the lightning head."

"Uh . . ." Dumbledore's eyes swept the Great Hall and over all the collected students with a frown. Now how was he going to wipe all those memories? Draco, Ron, and most of those present, frowned. This prophecy . . . what could it mean?

"What just happened?" Sybil asked with a dazed expression on her face. "My inner eye tells me that I must be going." She stood up and swept out of the Great Hall. Half way to her tower, she paused in front of a small and usually unnoticed alcove. "Are you there darling?"

"Yes aunt Sybil," Luna agreed, "did you do it?"

"Of course I did dear," Sybil said with a wide smile, "we Lovegoods must always stick together."

"Thank you aunt Sybil."

"Anything for my favorite niece," Sybil replied. "Now if you will excuse me, my inner eye tells me that it's past my bedtime."

"Goodnight aunt Sybil."

"Goodnight Luna."

Luna strolled back to her dorm room and pulled a few things out of her trunk to complete the next stage of her evil plan for world

domination . . . wait, that wasn't right. Her nose scrunched up as she tried to remember what the object of her plan was again . . . oh right, Harry.

With a grin, Luna sat down on her bed with a quill in one hand and a roll of parchment in the other. She tapped her chin with the end of the feather as she tried to think of the best way to start her 'interview.'

"Hmmm. We at the Daily Prophet are pleased to give you an exclusive interview with Tom Riddle, or as you probably know him 'you-know-who' the Dark Lord himself. Now then Tom, may I call you Tom?" Luna grinned as the words leapt onto the page. "Of course you may Rita," Luna said. "Let's see . . . Rita asks him why he became a Dark Lord and he replies. Well Rita," she mumbled to herself as she wrote Tom's part. "It all started when I was assigned detention in the forbidden forest by my Transfiguration Professor Volde says with tears in his eyes, confesses that Dumbledore made him pull his hair into pigtails and made him wear a dress. Then the old man had rented poor widdle Tom out to a large herd of centaurs and one particularly nasty troll." Luna wrote in a few details. " Hmmm . . . I suppose I should add that Dumbledore gave him 'private lessons' and that Voldemort burst into tears when asked to explain that. Interview comes to a close and Tom introduces his heterosexual life mate Peter Pettigrew, mentions that Peter is going to wipe the memory of this interview and in turn get his own memory wiped, big finish and there we go." Luna felt a profound sense of satisfaction as she looked over the interview she'd just manufactured. Harry was such a good soul, so forgiving, so willing to forgo revenge in favor of forgiveness . . . and that's why he was so lucky to have a girlfriend like Luna Lovegood, or rather that's why he was so lucky to get a girlfriend named Luna Lovegood some time in the near future.

All that taken care of, she skipped happily to post her exclusive article to the Daily Prophet. Boy would the world be surprised to find out the truth behind the fall of the Darkest Dark Lord they'd seen in generations.

"I deserve a reward for bringing this all to light," Luna mused to herself, "perhaps Harry would like to help me celebrate?"



|||||||

Luna's father wasn't the only Lovegood that worked in the field of journalism. Her great uncle Chaoticius Lovegood worked as the night watchman at the Prophet and when asked, he was more than happy to help his favorite niece get a little unofficial payback. He whistled to himself as he changed the type of the coming day's issue and gave a satisfied grin as he gave it the finishing touches. The Confundus was such a useful charm; when cast by a rank amateur it was powerful enough to get a powerful and ancient artifact to enter an unwilling fourth participant to the Triwizard, when cast by an unrecognized master of confusion . . . well, that was something else now wasn't it?

|||||||

Minerva was dragged from her bed by a frantic knocking on the door to her chambers. Cursing, she through on a robe and stumbled to the door. "What is it?" She demanded.

"Professor McGonagall come quick," the breathless Ravenclaw gasped, "there's a boy in the girl's dormitory. And he's grunting and groaning in a lewd manner."

"And you couldn't get your head of house," she asked irritably.

The girl blushed and looked down at her feet, "He may have placed some wards on his room, designed to keep out female students, after a certain incident involving some fifth years who really find intelligence to be sexy and that attitude may have some spread to the other years a bit."

The transfiguration mistress firmly shoved that bit of information into the back of her brain to take up residence with all the other unsettling things she's learned about the other teachers.

"Come along then," Minerva ordered. A frown formed as she thought of how to best resolve the situation. She stormed into the Ravenclaw tower and up to the girl's dorm. "What's all this about then?" She demanded as she walked in. Crude grunting came from behind the curtains of one of the four poster beds and Minerva through them back to find. "Mr. Potter?" She asked in surprise. The last person she

expected to see under these circumstances was young Harry Potter.  
"Um . . . why are you tied up and gagged?"

"Mmmph," Harry screamed through his gag, as he struggled against the ropes holding him down, which just caused the sleeping blond to clutch him tighter.

"And when did you start dating Ms. Lovegood?" She added when she identified the owner of the blond mop of hair pressed into Harry's shoulder. "Wake up Ms. Lovegood."

"Mmmm?" Luna looked up through half lidded eyes. "Good morning Professor McGonagall."

"Good morning Ms. Lovegood, care to explain why Mr. Potter is in bed with you?"

"He must have snuck in," Luna said with a dreamy smile.

"And then tied himself up?" Minerva said dryly.

"Perhaps he got confused in the dark," Luna suggested, "and tied himself up instead of tying me up."

"And how then did he tie himself to the frame of your bed?" Minerva was willing to play along for the time being.

"I'm not sure Professor," Luna said, "but I do know one thing."

"What is that?"

"That I am going to need private quarters," Luna replied with a sad look on her face, "since it's clear that Harry is going to return night after night to ravish me."

"He is?" Minerva asked.

"Mmmph?" Harry added with wide eyes, wondering once more exactly how he'd gotten into this mess.

"Of course he is," Luna agreed firmly, "he's going to keep sneaking into my bed until I am thoroughly and completely ravished." Her

leveled glare at Harry had him nodding in agreement trying to calm the intense Ravenclaw down.

"And what does that have to do with you getting your own quarters?"

"What if Harry accidentally snuck into the wrong bed?" Luna asked with a look of despair on her face. "He could accidentally ravish the wrong girl in the dark."

"I don't mind," one of Luna's dorm mates blurted followed by some agreeing mutters from the rest of the gathered girls.

"Well it's not a sacrifice that we can reasonably expect you to make," Luna said coldly. This was one thing she wasn't going to allow her dorm mates to steal, borrow, or 'share', especially considering the condition most of her things were in when she finally got them back.

"Will it keep me from being woken up again in the future to deal with this sort of thing?" Minerva asked tiredly.

"So long as you put it far enough from where you sleep," Luna agreed, "or if you have some very good silencing charms."

"Fine," Minerva agreed, "whatever. Good night." She couldn't help but feel that it was a different decision then she'd have made after getting a reasonable amount of sleep but at the moment, all that mattered was getting back to bed and going back to sleep, besides this was much better than the annual 'Kill Harry' kick the DADA professors had and didn't the senile old... ahem didn't the Headmaster say love was what Harry needed most to win against He-Who... Voldemort?

"Yay," Luna cheered.

AN: Just a straight Luna Harry fic, don't write many of those do I?  
Polish by SP, dogbertcarroll.

Omake by spd3432us

A shocked silence settled over the Great Hall shortly after post owls delivered the morning's Daily Prophet to the students. The only sounds the turning of pages and quiet conversation at the head table

since the professor's all had their newspapers delivered to their quarters by house-elves. As Harry finally finished reading the leading article in the day's paper, he stood up and cleared his throat

"Headmaster"

"Yes, Mister Potter?"

"The article in today's Prophet. It says you gave private instruction to Tom Riddle in your office. Is this true?"

A contemplative look settled upon Dumbledore's face. "Yes, Mister Potter. It's true. I gave Tom private tuition. He was quite the gifted student."

"Did you often give private instruction to students?"

"Only those that had exceptional potential. Still do on occasion. Why Mister Percival Weasley spent quite a bit of time in my office during his last year here receiving instruction in politics."

"And is there some recompense for this extra instruction?"

"Oh yes. But it's a private matter between student and teacher. I assure you, they do come to a mutually satisfying arrangement if that's your concern."

"Ummm... Not entirely but these are generally one on one instructions given in the teacher's office?"

"Yes. That's the normal location."

"So all this extra time that Malfoy and Snape spend together in his office?"

Snape turned pale when he heard his name being mentioned and immediately signaled for his godson Draco to bring him a paper.

"That's Professor Snape, Mister Potter. But I'm not at liberty to divulge the relationships between the instructors and any current students."

At that, a gasp was heard from nearly all the students still at table as the implications of Dumbledore's statements settled in.

Over at the Gryffindor table, Ginny looked at Ron who was shaking his head and muttering -- "No. Not Percy. It was bad enough he turned his back on the family but to be unnatural also? Mum will be heartbroken when she hears about this."

An Omake for chapter 83 of Odd Ideas by Jetflash

Sirius finally had Peter cornered. The sniveling rat cowered away from his onetime friend as the Head of the Black family leveled his wand at Peter's chest.

"Any last words, Peter?"

"Ill Wish... I wish..."

Suddenly he threw off his cloak, revealing an outfit common among minstrels at the turn of the 20th century in America.

"I wish I was in Dixie, hooray! Hooray!"

Disclaimer: Henching rhymes with Wenching. Now get your dirty paws off me you filthy apes.

Henching

Hermione's jaw dropped at the odd sight of Draco's two goons sitting quietly in the library.

"Granger," one of them asked dumbly, "yer smart arn't yeh?"

"I like to think so," Hermione agreed cautiously.

"Could ya give us help with dis," the other one asked, using the puppy dogs eyes technique to great effect, probably because he had the same intelligence as one.

"Let me see that," Hermione said reluctantly, but unable to stop herself from assisting another student in learning. "Study guide for the Igor Standard Aptitude Battery?"

"Yah gots ta get a good score ta be a union hench," Goyle explained, "our dads failed an'had ta join a non union villain."

"Oh," Hermione said dumbly, "is that why you two are working for Draco?"

"Dats fer work study credit," Crabbe replied with a wide grin, like a dog that had just performed a new trick. Hermione barely managed to stop herself from patting him on the head.

"Oh . . . well, it doesn't seem to be too difficult." Hermione said absently as she flipped through the booklet. "Fairly straight forward anyway, I guess I could give you a bit of tutoring." It just wasn't in her to say no to someone that asked her for help and if they pass this test then that's two less recruits for Voldemort, she justified.

Looking at the two, she decided the physical portion was going to be their best bet for passing. Glancing through the guide she even found some magical tricks that would help, like a version of silent apparition that would allow their boss to summon them to her or him at need

and since it relied on her magic and skills in creating the item that summoned them they were sure to get bonus points on that one.

To Ron's disgust and to Harry's amazement, the arrangement that Hermione worked out with the two idiots worked out fairly well for all concerned. The boys were too busy studying to help Draco perpetrate any dastardly deeds and Hermione gained a new understanding of the evils of inbreeding and what it had done to the magical world after a short conversation with her two pupils.

"We're not gonna be married til after da test," Crabbe explained, "our dads had ta get jobs wif da Dark Lord . . ."

"Da non union Dark Lord," Goyle added.

"For they could get married, we jes havta pass the exam so we don havta join da Dark Lord and still get married."

"Oh," Hermione said in surprise, "I didn't know you two were engaged. Who are the . . . lucky." Hermione made a gagging noise. "Sorry I just threw up a little in my mouth, who are the girls?"

"I'm gonna marry his sister an he's gonna marry mine," Crabbe replied.

"Jes like our dads before us and der dads before them."

"All da way back ta da firs Crabbe and Goyle."

"So your . . ." she made another gagging noise. "Just threw up a little in my mouth again," Hermione said with an embarrassed look on her face, "why don't we just agree to never talk about our families ever again?"

And so things went until the day finally came to take the Igor Standard Achievement Battery, or ISTAB exam for short.

"You two both have extra pencils?" Hermione asked anxiously. "And you've both used the facilities?" She was so nervous about their performance that Hermione had managed to arrange special dispensation to accompany the two boys to the exam site.

Professor McGonagall had been surprisingly helpful, saying she had done something similar when she was a lass, until an argument between her and Amelia over trademark infringement and cat suits had resulted in both their retirements.

"Uh huh." Goyle agreed.

"Good," Hermione said, "well . . . good luck." She watched as the two boys walked into the sealed room with all the other henching candidates, knowing in her heart that there was no chance that either of them would get any of the questions right . . . well, maybe the first one that asked what their names were.

"Excuse me," a polite man in a jet black cloak announced himself, "are you here to take the henching exam? If so then you need to go through that door, the red one, if you need help then I could take you in."

"No," Hermione said with a start, "I'm just here to support a couple of the people that are are taking it."

"I see . . . would you care to take another exam to pass the time," he asked, seeing the minion summoning necklace she was wearing. "Your minions are going to be in there for quite some time."

"What kind of exam?" Hermione asked. "Is it difficult?"

"One of the most difficult entry exams in the business," he agreed.

"Well . . . I haven't had time to study." Hermione bit her lower lip in distress.

"We don't actually put out a study guide," he said as he took her by the elbow and pulled her towards another exam area, "just do your best. You can always retake it again later if you want a higher score."

"Well . . . I suppose . . ."

"Excellent, why don't you wait in here with some of the other candidates while we get everything set up."



Hermione found herself in a small stifling room with several people that made Draco Malfoy seem like a humble and intelligent conversationalist. Each one of them was going on at length and in excruciating detail about how great they were and how they would dominate the competition.

"Not with those teeth you won't," Hermione muttered to herself.

"What was that?" The nearest moron asked sharply.

"I said not with those teeth you won't," Hermione replied, "honestly it's like none of you have ever heard of brushing." Her parents had always said that a good smile was important for a good career and a good career was the key to a happy life. "Look, the thing is . . . well, teeth aren't supposed to be black or fizzing."

"They aren't?"

"No they aren't," Hermione said firmly. She reached into her purse and pulled out a stack of emergency dental care coupons. "I want each of you to take one of these, they're each good for a free cleaning and one free cavity filling or extraction." Not that they'd be able to escape her parent's office before everything was taken care of but that little fact didn't seem important enough to mention. "Go get this done right now and take the exam later."

"But . . ."

"Go," Hermione growled, allowing the full force of her bossiness to wash over the room. In seconds, they were all on their way to the Granger Dental Clinic.

"Sorry for the wait, if you will all just . . . where did the rest of them go?"

"They're all out getting their teeth taken care of," Hermione replied.

"And just why are they doing that?"

"I pointed out how bad their oral hygiene was and passed out a few free coupons," Hermione explained, "good for a free cleaning and one filling or extraction."

"I wasn't aware that there were coupons for dental care?"

"Mum came up with them," Hermione said with a grin.

"Alright then . . . may I see one of these coupons of yours?"

"Sure," Hermione agreed.

"I notice that there isn't any mention of pain killer in this coupon?"

"Mum says that extra thick straps are cheaper and more efficient than pain killers," Hermione explained, "and dad says that this way they don't have to suffer through the hangover."

"I see . . . right this way please." The instructor was definitely impressed with the way she had removed the competition. They'd be going through quite a bit of pain, setting Miss Granger up as the Alpha in a subtle way, as she was the one that had sent them there. They'd even be paying her to do so, as their money was going into her family coffers and in the end they'd even have to thank her, as having perfect teeth would improve their appearance, an important trait for anyone that wanted to lead anything other than a pirate ship or the state of Arkansas.

The exam was relatively simple for Hermione as most of it consisted of logic puzzles and the remainder of the questions were easily solved by an application of common sense. Frankly, she was a bit insulted by how easy it was, after all who would be dumb enough to put a hero into an easily escapable death trap with only one inept guard?

"Done then?" the proctor asked.

"Is there any more?" Hermione asked half hopefully. "Perhaps something a bit more difficult?"

"Oh sure," he agreed, "but you have to be a full fledged member to get any of those tests."

"Are Crabbe and Goyle still taking their exams?"

"For a little while yet," he agreed.

"Does it cost anything to join?"

"Not until you rise higher," he said.

"And do I have to do any paperwork?"

"You'll have to do some after you complete the placement exams," he said with a frown of distaste, "but it doesn't have to be filed for several months yet."

"Alright," Hermione agreed, "I can still quit later if I want to right?"

"Of course," he agreed, "and there won't be any trouble unless you try to set yourself up as a non union villain."

"I'll do it then," Hermione agreed.

"Excellent," the proctor said with a grin, "I am always happy to see a new up and comer join the organization so please allow me to be the first to welcome you to the guild."

"Thank you," Hermione said. With a grin, she settled down to work through the next test.

This test was significantly more difficult then the last had been. It had sections testing everything from magical theory to knowledge of physics and engineering. Hermione felt a sense of profound dissatisfaction when she finally finished her exam and she felt herself deeply regretting the fact that she hadn't been able to study, cursing herself for her overconfidence after the first exam.

"How'd you do?" The proctor asked after she put her pencil down.

"Not good," Hermione admitted, "the magic section was no problem but the rest of it . . . I guess I never thought about how narrow the curriculum at Hogwarts really is."

"Well . . . you're still young," he said charitably, "and I suppose you could enroll in the Guild correspondence school to fill those gaps in your education."

"Is it accredited?"

"Fully," he agreed, "comes free with your membership. Most don't bother but they have some good programs."

"Great," Hermione said happily, "and I can retake this test later?"

"Not this particular test," he said as he looked over it, "but every department has their own exam which is longer and more difficult."

"Good," Hermione said in relief, "are Crabbe and Goyle finished yet?"

"Yep," he agreed.

"How'd they do?"

"Ended up scoring high enough to be rated lackey fifth class," he replied, "after they re-scored the written portion anyway."

"What do you mean re-scored?"

"They got a zero until it was discovered who you were," he said with a faint hint of embarrassment, "after that we passed them of course."

"Huh?"

"They answered every question with the words 'whatever Granger says it is,' even put that in the name block."

"I . . ."

"Like I said, as soon as they realized that you were Granger."

"I don't understand?"

"You're their boss," the proctor explained, "if you tell them that the sky is red then they'll accept that. Their world is what you tell them it is."

"I see . . ."

"Though if you'll take a suggestion."

"Please," Hermione agreed.

"You may wish to get more intelligent minions," he advised, "I'm not suggesting that you fire the two you already have you understand. I'm just saying that you'll need more than two and that you might want your future minions to be able to pour piss from a boot."

"I'll take that under advisement," Hermione agreed.

"Then all we have to do is give you some paperwork to fill out." He handed her a thick envelope. "And your membership card."

Hermione's thoughts were racing as she collected the moronic duo. She had tests to study for and new subjects to explore and she couldn't wait to get started. Having learned her lesson in her third year, she didn't even consider the idea of using a time turner choosing instead to cut back on sleep from four to three hours a night and Potions studies by half due to the Snape factor. For those who don't know, the Snape factor means that Slytherins get an extra twenty points, Hufflepuffs get deducted fifteen points, Ravenclaws lose ten, while Gryffindors lose twenty.

After returning to Hogwarts, Hermione went up to her bed and set to filling out the stack of paperwork that she'd been given.

"Name of your heroic nemeses," Hermione read with a frown, "I don't have a heroic nemesis. I don't even know any heroes except for . . ."

Her gaze focused on her best friend. "Harry, could you come over here for a second?"

"What is it?" Harry asked.

"Would you mind filling this form out for me?" She asked sweetly. "Please? I've been accepted in a fully accredited course, but I need a nemesis ."

Harry scratched his head. "Nemesis?"

"Yes, I need someone to work against. I'm suppose to dominate and control my nemesis as part of my work while they try and do the same to me. It's not something to be taken lightly. It is a lifetime commitment... unless you find it unfulfilling and then you can fill out some forms..." the bushy haired girl said shyly, looking at the ground nervously.

Harry reached out and lifted her chin. "What am I supposed to do with this?"

"Just write your name in block one, Voldemort and his real name in block two, and sign it. I'll take care of the rest," Hermione said.

"Sure Hermione," Harry agreed, "anything you want." He quickly filled out the parts she'd indicated. "Need anything else?"

"That will do it, thank you Harry."

"No problem Hermione, like I said anything."

Hermione skipped off cheerfully, thinking of all the extra work she'd be doing.

IIIIIIIIII

Meanwhile, at the Dark Headquarters of the Dark Organization that Hermione had just joined . . .

"Granger kid's already filled out her paperwork," one of the bureaucrats reported to her boss.

"Already," her boss said with a pleased smile, "let me see. Hmmm, who's her nemesis this Harry Potter?"

"He isn't a member of the League but I looked him up and he's definitely an up and comer," she said quickly, "but that's not the best part, look at his old nemesis."

"Wonderful," her boss cheered, "I knew the kid was good but to rob the Scab Lord Mold and wort of his chief nemesis . . . well, I wouldn't be surprised if we ended up working for Ms. Granger some day."

"I agree," she said with a grin. "And on Ms. Granger's suggestion, I took the liberty of contacting the Dark Peerage to let them know that scab has been using a noble title."

"Ms. Granger suggested that?"

"She included a small outline of her future plans, number three was to find a way to help her nemesis deal with the scab and next to that was another notation wondering if the scab was really a Lord . . . oh and a doodle of a kitty."

"My god," her boss said in shock, "using her registered nemesis to deal with a scab. The girl's a prodigy."

"I know sir."

IIIIIIIIII

Voldemort was sitting on his throne watching his Death Eaters take turns torturing each other with a lazy grin on his face, it was good to be the Dark Lord, and it was good to be alive. His good mood began so sour when a large envelope appeared in his lap.

"Lucius," he screamed, "deal with this."

"Yes my Lord," Lucius simpered. He got down on his knees before his master and opened it with his finger. "It appears to be a cease and desist order my Lord," he said nervously, "stating that you may no longer use the term 'lord' in your exalted name."

"What?" Voldemort screamed. "Let me see that."

"It also states that you may call yourself a Dark Douche Bag but only after paying the fines for calling yourself a Lord and paying the fees to . . . master?" Lucius didn't like the look on his Lord's face.

"Cruc . . ." he cut off when another envelope arrived. While Lucius sighed in relief, the Dark Lord opened the envelope and read the missive inside. "Harry Potter changed to a union nemesis?" He said in shock. "No longer allowed to . . . CRUCIO."

|||||

Harry was in Hogsmead doing whatever it was that students did with the precious time they had away from their 'place of learning' when he was confronted by what appeared to be a male prostitute of some kind.

"Harry Potter?" A man in spandex and a trench coat asked.

"Who's asking?" Harry demanded.

"Captain Awesome with the League of Heros," the Lockheart lookalike replied.

"What can I do for you?" Harry decided that it was best to humor the obviously insane man, at least for the moment.

"I was in the area and so it falls to me to give you a bit of literature," he said with a sparkling smile, "and now that this is done I must be off. Up up and over there I go." He stretched his arms out in front of him and ran off making whooshing noises.

Harry flipped through the pamphlet until he was sure that the crazy man was not coming back then marked the box marked not interested and filed it in the nearest garbage can. There were many things in the world that he wasn't sure of, the fact that he wanted absolutely nothing to do with the idiot in spandex was not one of those things.

|||||



Hermione was waiting in an empty classroom when her next two prospective minions arrived for their interviews.

"I'm gonna have your interviews together if that's alright with the two of you," Hermione said with a smile.

"That will be lovely," Luna said happily.

"I thought I was here to get my potions homework checked?" Neville said nervously.

"No," Hermione disagreed, "you're here to apply to the position of Dungeon Master and head torturer."

"I am?" Neville asked in surprise.

"You are if you want me to check your potions homework," Hermione agreed.

"Oh."

"What about me?" Luna asked. "Why am I here?"

"You're here to be my evil assistant," Hermione explained, "remember?"

"Remember what?"

"Never mind Luna," Hermione said with a sigh, "now then do either of you . . ." she broke off when an envelope bearing the wax seal of the dark peerage.

"What is it?" Luna asked. "Is it a puppy?" She finished hopefully.

"No it's not a puppy," Hermione said absently, "I'm being knighted."

"What?" Neville blurted, the boy had a look of shock on his face.

"For my work in exposing fraud claiming to be a noble and for the part I've played in attempting his destruction," Hermione explained, "allowing me to claim the title of Dark Dame and also granting me a

small stipend. Now then Neville, why do you think you're qualified to become my Dungeon Master and head torturer?"

"Because you told me I was applying?"

"Good answer," Hermione said with a nod. "Luna."

"Yes Hermione?"

"Why do you want to become my evil assistant?"

"For the seduction of course," Luna replied proudly.

"The what?"

"The seduction," Luna repeated loudly, "you should really consider getting your ears checked Hermione."

"What seduction Luna?"

"Harry is your registered nemesis right?"

"Yes," Hermione agreed slowly.

"And as your registered nemesis, you'll be kidnapping him and putting him in easily escapeable traps right?"

"Uh huh."

"And to get out of those traps, the hero will often resort to seducing the evil assistant to gain her aid."

"What?"

"Oh it will be grand." Luna sighed.

"No seducing Harry Luna," Hermione said firmly.

"Of course not," Luna agreed with a scandalized expression on her face, "I would never dream of that. I want Harry to seduce and then properly ravish me, not the other way around. That would just be wrong."

"No getting seduced by Harry either Luna."

"But the evil assistant's handbook says that being seduced and ravished by your registered hero is one of my more important duties," Luna protested.

"How'd you know that?" Hermione demanded.

"It was one of the questions on the evil assistant's test," Luna replied, "why?"

|||||||

Harry had finished with most of the errands he'd wanted to do in Hogsmede and had joined Ron for a bout of non-alcoholic binge drinking when he was again accosted by a strange looking individual. This time it was a woman in a trench coat and a pink mexican wrestler mask.

"May I have a moment of your time Mr. Potter?" She asked. "Regarding your possible recruitment into the league?"

"I thought I told you guys I wasn't interested?" Harry asked with a frown.

"You did," the League rep agreed. "And while disappointed, we were willing to accept your decision until we realized who was sent to talk to you. Please understand that nepotism isn't always a bad thing . . ."

"But it is in this case right?" Harry asked.

"On the nose Mr. Potter," the rep agreed, "and rather than saying no, I was hoping that you would ask me a question."

"What question?"

"That question would be 'What's in it for me?' You see Mr. Potter, we can help you with your registered nemesis and with the so called 'Dark Lord' Voldemort."

"How can you do that?" Harry asked suspiciously.

"Well," she said, "for one we can give you the League Handbook. Filled with hundreds of tips and tricks telling you how to survive and escape a wide array of deadly traps and ambushes."

"Ha," Ron laughed, "you gotta read a book."

"Fear not Mr. Weasley," the League rep said with a grin, "we have one for you too."

"I gotta read a book," Ron whined, "that's not fair."

"Why don't you look inside," the rep suggested.

"It's a picture book," Ron said in delight, "bloody brilliant. Much better than the manual they gave you."

"Yeah," Harry agreed dryly, "why would I want a book that outlines exactly how to survive attacks by super villains when I could read a comic."

"Exactly," Ron agreed with a superior smile, "looks like you picked the short straw on this one mate."

"Does this happen often?" Harry asked.

"There are two common classes of sidekick," the rep replied, "the apprentice type and the . . ."

"Ha," Ron laughed, "look at this picture Harry. It's a monkey with two asses."

"Uh . . . that's great mate," Harry said uncomfortably.

"As I was saying, there's the apprentice type and the comic relief type. It appears that Mr. Weasley is the latter."

AN: And that's enough of that one, at least for now.

Omake:

There I was," Ron began, "trapped in the dungeon so Harry had to face the Dark Dame on his own without my help."

"Then what happened?" One of the breathless firstys asked.

"Well," Ron said with a grin. "Harry was in a tight spot let me tell you, the Dark Dame had stolen Harry's clothes and wand so he had to take her in hand to hand combat."

"Then?" Luna prompted.

"It was bloody brilliant," Ron said enthusiastically. "First, Harry stripped her and took her wand to make things even. Then he pinned her down and forced her to scream for mercy."

"Uh . . . you saw that?" Hermione squeaked.

"I put a peep hole in the cell," Luna whispered, "I needed to keep him distracted while I arranged his escape . . . it wasn't easy to set things up so Ron could figure it out."

Omake by clell65619

In accordance with Guild Directive 2349837.214 dated March 13, 1996 a standard Plot of Doom was directed at my Guild Registered Nemesis, Harry James Potter. On April 7th I executed the plot (Guild Plot Archive Granger-392.7) and initiated Operation: Death by Multiple Orgasm against HJ Potter.

Assisting in this plot were my entire cell. Operatives Goyle, Crabbe and Longbottom stood guard and redirected the investigation of the authority figures while Operative Lovegood and I performed the actual attack. I would like to take this chance to submit special recognition for Operative Lovegood. She volunteered to perform the attack alone, allowing me to prepare for the next stage of my plans. It is unfortunate that I could not allow her to do so, as my sense of self worth would not allow me to send a minion to do something I was unwilling to do.

The attack proceeded according to the plan on file at the Guild Planning and Logistics office (Guild PaL Reference: Feminine Wiles-Tagteam-Granger/Lovegood-LuckyBastard-493), however due to unforeseen circumstances the attack exceeded it's scheduled window by six and 3/4 hours.

Despite the support of the Guild Planning and Logistics team, My Guild assigned Nemesis Potter managed a level 4 thwarting of the plot.

I can however report partial success. While failing to bring about the death of my Guild assigned Nemesis, he was rendered unconscious for several hours allowing for the escape of my entire team.

Enclosed is the preliminary outline for my next plot to destroy my Guild assigned Nemesis. I project that paperwork and planning for the implementation of this plan will culminate in a successful operation in late June of 2008.

- Yours in Villainy, Hermione Jane Granger.

Mini Omake by Tommy King

"I'm sorry miss but you didn't make the grade to be a Union Dark Lord, however we have a Harry James Potter, a Union Grey Lord looking for a 2IC and Strategist, interested?"

"What about Ron Weasley?"

"Oh he failed the shiny object test and has gone to work for the non-Union Light Lord Dumbledore."

Another Omake by Tommy King

"What about Ron Weasley?"

"Oh, he changed his name and went to America to work with a Kim Possible, he liked the perks, a pet rat and all the nachos he could eat."

Omake by wt4dave

"Ah Harry how can I help you?"

"Well Headmaster," Harry answered, "I recently discovered an old Life Debt owed to Harold Potter, my grandfather. The goblins tracked

down the son of the original person under the debt. We decided that he would lend me his bodyguard until Voldemort is taken care of."

"I'm sorry Harry, but retainers and bodyguards are not allowed to reside in the school unless they are part of the staff or another student."

"Yes sir, Hermione mentioned that. I was thinking Brock could teach a special Non-Magical Defense class this year..."

And another by wt4dave

TO: Guild of Calamitous Intent

FROM: Hermione Jane Granger, Arch Villain 3rd Class, HJG8675309

SUBJECT: Official Notice of Life Debt

In accordance with Guild Regulation LD54333328.1012 I am filing notice

that I owe several Life Debts to my Nemesis, Harry James Potter (See

Case File HJP0731801995). Since I am unable to conduct operations against Potter until the Life Debts are paid I am declaring Case HFS.

My plan is to use the Life Debts to get closer to my Nemesis. Once they are paid off I will be able to resume operations from a position of strength with new understanding of my adversary.

Yours in Villainy,

Hermione Jane Granger

HFS - Heel-Face Swerve. I common tactic in professional wrestling

when the Heel (bad guy) pretends to join the Face (good guy) so he can

set him up later.

Omake by cloneserpents

Harry looked up from the morning edition of the Daily Prophet and said "It looks like Death Eaters are dying by the handful."

"Really?" asked Ron as he shoveled another heaping helping of kipper into his mouth.

"Yeah, according to the Prophet three were found in Knockturn Alley strangled, four were gutted in Spinner's End, and another six were found dismembered in one of the rooms at the Leaky Cauldron," the black-haired boy read.

"I wonder what's happening to them?" asked Ron as he masticated the fish.

"The Guild doesn't like scabs," Hermione said under her breath.

"What was that?" Harry asked.

"Oh, nothing," she replied and quickly covered her tracks, there was no reason for Harry to know of the Guild. "I was just thinking aloud about an Arthiomy problem."

Another Omake by cloneserpents

Early that evening, Ginny Weasley cornered Hermione.

"Listen here, you know-it-all, back off!" the younger girl said, jabbing her finger into Hermione's ribs for emphasis. "I've seen how you've been following Harry around and I don't like it, understand? You better leave well enough alone if you know what's good for you!"

After supper, Hermione met with her minions and told them of her encounter with Ginny.

"Do you think she'll follow up on her threat?" asked Luna.

"Even if she did, I don't think she'd be a threat," Hermione replied. "However, if she does try to do something, she might interfere with



our plans. And I can't have that. We have to get her away from Harry."

"That will be difficult, she follows Harry like a puppy," Luna said.

"So, we'll just have to distract her," offered Neville. "Take her mind off of him."

"Good plan, Nev," cheered Hermione. "You're in charge of 'Operation: Distract the Ginger!'"

"How do you suggest I do that?" he asked.

"Oh, just use a mild Love Potion," advised Hermione.

"A Love Potion? But Ginny's already infatuated with Harry," Neville pointed out. "How will giving Ginny a Love Potion help her forget about Harry?"

"I never said that you should use the Love Potion to make Ginny fall for Harry," Hermione said. "I was thinking of another Gryffindor boy."

"Well, if not Harry, then who should Ginny fall for?" he asked.

Hermione replied by staring directly at Neville with a knowing smile on her lips. A second later, Neville began to blush and he said, "Did I ever tell you that I like being your minion?"

Omake by dogbertcarroll

"Just write your name in block one, Voldemort and his real name in block two, and sign it. I'll take care of the rest," Hermione said.

"Sure Hermione," Harry agreed, "anything you want." He quickly filled out the parts she'd indicated. "Need anything else?"

"That will do it, thank you Harry."

"No problem Hermione, like I said anything."

Ron walked over to the broadly smiling Harry, "What was that all about?"

"Apparently 'mione has decided to ask me to be her boyfriend."

"Good on you, mate! I was a bit worried she'd set her sights on me. It's not that I don't think she's beautiful or anything, it's just that I think she's a bit over my head. She won most of our arguments and that's just no good in a relationship."

Harry nodded. "Good point, that. Have you thought about Luna or Tracey?"

Ron scratched his chin thoughtfully. "Luna hardly argues with me at all, so I don't think she's interested. Tracey... well there's just no chemistry there. I'm thinking Pansy, truthfully. We've gotten into some splendid rows following potions."

Harry nodded. "Yeah, they were impressive. Well, I'm off to talk to Dobby. I figure my first argument with Hermione should be over S.P.E.W."

"Wow, that's shooting for the top. Sure you want to come on that strong to start?"

Harry grinned. "Have to. She put herself out getting us paperwork, making it formal, the least I can do is show an equally strong commitment to start with."

Ron slapped him on the back. "Glad to hear it. Well I'm off to find Pansy. I have a couple of remarks regarding snakes and Draco's weak blood, I've been dying to use."

"Have fun, and Ron?"

"Yeah?"

"Thanks for explaining about relationships. All I've really had to go on was the Dursleys and they really skewed how I viewed things."

"Not a problem. I knew no one had explained things to you and as your friend it was my duty. Well, wish me luck."

"Knock her dead!"

0-0-0-0-0-0-0

Snape was sprawled on the floor, his wand broken along with his kneecaps and one of his arms.

"And this is your only warning. Harry Potter has already been assigned a guild approved nemesis and as an unlicensed villain, you are not allowed to do squat to him. I hear even a hint of you trying to muscle in on another guild member's territory and the next meeting won't be nearly this civil."

The two large men faded back into the shadows.

"Who's next on the list?"

"I got a Draco Malfoy, but Granger said she'll handle that herself. I think she's going to try and get him licensed as a grade three nuisance to keep Potter from getting bored while she plots. We've got Tom Riddle and then Albus Dumbledore and we should be done."

Omake by fenriswolf001

To: the Dark Lady Granger, Daughter of Dentists

From: The International Confederation of Villains

re: minion guidelines

As you have been previously informed, the Confederation has received

several complaints as to the competency of your minions, to wit, they

are both well-trained and difficult to deceive, leading to an unfair

failure rate on the part of the heroes and heroines who attempt to

oppose your will. While such failures are expected and even

encouraged when minor heroes encounter you personally, your minions

are a different matter.

Underlings and lackeys by definition are supposed to be possessed of

a minimal level of competency and initiative. While several of your minions do fall well within those guidelines (see Crabbe, Goyle and Malfoy) the majority of your operatives (see Lovegood, Davis, Abbot, Patil(s), Greengrass, Bones, et al) regularly exceed the maximum skill levels for union minions. The Confederation has always adhered to the belief that overly competent minions leads to the potential risk of them striking out on their own, e.g. scabs, a situation best nipped in the bud before it occurs.

We understand from your response to your steward's suggestion that said over-achieving minions undergo standard union lobotomies (see Steward dismemberment and disposal) that you feel such steps would

produce sub-optimal results. We also acknowledge (and give bonus points for) your vicious and frightening threat to involve your parents, both members in good standing in the Evil Overlord Affiliate, the International Orthodontics Association, in any further dispute.

We therefore suggest a compromise, that you refrain from contracting any further hyper-competent minions until such time as the lower

scores of your sub-competent members (see Riddle, Tom) brings the overall average down to union standards. Given your ongoing mission

statement, re, the death of your arch-nemesis one Harry James Potter

due to an overdose of orgasms, this should not result in any undue hardship on the part of your organization. We await what we hope will be your positive response in this matter.

Sincerely,

S. Claus, Esq.

Supreme Overlord of Evil

Omake by bluenek666

"Excuse are you the registered nemesis of one 'Hermione Granger'?"

"Err, yes."

"I'm your interviewer for your possible induction into the League. Now if I could just ask you some questions and then move on to the next applicant, I would appreciate it. Now then first question, do you have any previous experience with foiling fiendish plots by criminal masterminds, evil overlords, etc.?"

"There was this one bloke named Voldemort whose tried to kill me six or seven times."

The interviewer looked at her clipboard, "Ahh yes, your previous nemesis. So you have previous experience as a freelancer and want to move up?"

"Um, sure."

"Was any of the disrupted plots created for the sole purpose of vengeance for the first foiled plot?"

"At least two. Now he just does it cause he hates me."

"Sufficient prior experience," she remarked as she marked something down, "gender male: have you ever rescued a minimum of two separate damsels from a dangerous beast, death trap, kidnapping, or horrific accident leading to her eventual demise?"

"I saved Ginny Weasley from a 60 foot snake when I was twelve. And Gabrielle Delacour from a colony of merpeople when i was fourteen."

"Do you have an alias?"

"No nearly everyone knows who I am."

"Excellent," she smiled. "Now then, you are becoming too old to be titled 'boy hero' and given an apprenticeship for a few years to gain skills and work experience. However, we are starting a correspondence course to compete with the guild. Welcome to the League, Junior Hero Second Class Harry Potter. Heres the handbook and some spare paperwork." She said dumping a thick book and a stack of papers into his arms. "Goodday."

Harry looked at the paperwork in his arms, "Why do I have 30 copies of 'Accidental Private/Public Property Damage Liability Negation Form'?"

Omake by meteoricshipyards

"Hermione! I should have known it was you! How'd you do on the transfiguration test?"

"Pretty sure I O'ed it, Harry. But enough small talk! As much as I admire you, Harry, this will be our last meeting!"

"Wait! Before you kill me, can you at least tell me your plans?"

"Sure, since it will do you no good! I've got an Arithmancy project due tomorrow, and some Ancient Runes to study. Since you take neither

of those classes, as I said, it will do you no good to know! And there's no way to stop me! Unless you need help with the potions essay."

"No, I'm good, finished it this morning, but maybe if you need a break you can check it for me. So what happens now?"

"This is a minor variation on the trap you so cleverly escaped last time. We have the weight, and instead of the fire that would cut through the rope, which unfortunately didn't work because my henchgirl used cable instead of rope and it didn't burn.

"But this time, no fire. That huge bale of dandelions currently weighs more than that weight over you. Once I leave a Snorkack will come through that door and start on its favorite meal. As soon as the

bale of dandelions weighs less than the weight, it will lower and crush you. Bwaa haa haa!"

"Hey! That's pretty good. You've been practicing your evil laugh."

She blushed prettily. "Thank you for noticing. Well, see you later!"

"Bye, Hermione."

Harry pulled at the ropes holding him. Acromantula silk ropes, which, as Hermione told him the first time, was "pound for pound stronger than steel!" Of course that first time she hadn't actually used rope, and the single strands of silk she had used didn't weigh hardly anything so all he had to do was pull and he was free. But not this time. Real ropes.

The other door, connected by an intricate mechanism to the one that Hermione just left by, clicked and swung open. Through the door came a ...

A snake? Harry was a bit disappointed. He had been looking forward to finding out what a snorkack looked like.

"What happened to the snorkack?" he asked in parsletongue.

"It was its poker night and asked me to fill in. Said all I had to do was eat my favorite food, but I don't see any mice."

"Must have made a mistake. Could you help me get out of these ropes?"

"I can try." The snake grabbed the loose end of the knot, and suddenly Harry's hands were free.

"Thanks. Come on, I'll summon you a mouse."

"Thanks, mate."

- - -

"Hi, Hermione."

"Hi, Harry. Here's your potion's essay. Looks good."

"Thanks."

"Oh, be careful around Luna. I ran into her a little while ago and she was grumpy."

"Luna? Grumpy?"

"Seems she lost a bit of money playing poker."

Mini Omake by Tommy King

"Err, Your Dark Ladyness, what exactly do you want me to do?" asked the now redshirted Draco.

"Oh, you're on my Security Detail." replied Hermione

IIIIIIIIII

"Draco, open that door and make sure it isn't booby-trapped." ordered the Dark Lady.

Proud to be given such an important job in the service of his new leader Draco strode, er, minced forward and flung the door open.



BOOOOOOOOOOM, the door exploded and he was sure he heard Crabbe or Goyle shouting in the distance as his vision faded

"Oh my God, they've killed Draco!!"

Omake: Pet Fleur

"Now all we need ta do is get ya a pet," Hagrid rumbled. He took the boy into the pet shop and spent several minutes examining the owls to find the best one.

"I want that one," Harry said, his gaze locked on the creature in the shop's largest cage.

"I am not a pet," the well endowed platinum headed girl growled. Fleur was not having a good day, she'd gone to this triple damned island of pigs with her father to conduct some business and as soon as she'd let the man out of her sight, an odious toad like individual had captured her and locked her in a cage. "My name is Fleur and . . ."

"Well . . . yer only su'pos ta have an owl er a cat er a toad, but I don't see the harm in ignoring all that."

"Yay," Harry cheered.

"You're not even listening to me are you?" Fleur demanded.

"I think I'll call you . . . Hedwig," Harry said thoughtfully.

"I said my name is Fleur."

"Hedwig."

"Fleur."

"Hedwig."

"Fleur, or I will give you such a pinch."

"Fleur then," Harry agreed. "And I'm Harry, pleased to meet you."

It could have been worse, Fleur thought to herself as the boy examined the subway schedule, she could have been sold to the man in the comical bowler hat. "Is something wrong 'arrie?" She asked the child.

"I don't want to go back to the Dursley house," Harry said with the most adorable pout.

"Really, why is that?"

"Because they're all a bunch of bastards," Harry said honestly, "and they'll probably make me let Dudley play with you."

"Oh." Fleur didn't know why but she felt a chill at that last sentence. "Do you 'ave much money."

"Ten pounds." Harry dug around his pockets for a few minutes to find the money Hagrid had given him to get home. "Four Galleons, sixteen Sickles, and three Knuts."

"Give them to me," Fleur ordered, "I will have them exchanged so that we can get tickets to somewhere else."

"Okay," Harry agreed, "here."

"Thank you 'arrie," Fleur said with a smile.

"You're welcome," Harry said automatically.

Fleur marched up to the money changer and dropped a few of the coins on the table. "What is the exchange rate on these?" She demanded.

"Is this real gold?" The astonished clerk demanded.

"What else would it be you silly man?" Fleur asked with a coy smile.

"Here." He counted out several hundred pounds. "Take this and we'll call it even."

"Is this enough for two tickets to France?" She demanded.

"More then enough," He agreed.

"Thank you then," Fleur said, her smile returning full force, "come along 'arrie."

"Coming Fleur," Harry agreed. The trip to France was one of the most interesting experiences in Harry's young life, first they'd ridden a bus, then a ferry, and now they were on a train. "Hey Fleur."

"What is it 'arrie?"

"Why can't I understand anyone?"

"Because they are all speaking French," Fleur replied, "it is a civilized tongue unlike the barbarous language they speak in your 'omeland that sounds like the grunting of pigs."

"Oh . . . can you teach me?"

"But of course 'arrie," Fleur agreed, "or else you would not be able to go to school."

"They speak French at Hogwarts?"

"You are not going to that dreadful place," Fleur said with a wave. She'd been able to wring details of the boy's home life out of him over the course of their time together and there was one thing that she was sure of, he was not going back. "Beauxbatons, a much better school I assure you."

"But I wanna learn magic," Harry protested.

"You will learn magic at Beauxbatons," Fleur assured him, "better magic." Sure that there was nothing in the world that the English pigs could do half as well as the civilized French.

"Oh . . . okay then," Harry agreed.

IIIIIIII

A miasma of despair had fallen over the Delacour residence with the disappearance of their eldest daughter while abroad with her father.

"Why did I let her out of my sight," he cried out in anguish, "why?" He would never forgive himself if anything had happened to the girl,

never. Grief turned to joy when one of the maids arrived with the missing girl and a child clad in rags.

"Hello," Harry said, "my name is Harry and this is my pet Fleur."

"Yes," her mother said dryly, "we know Fleur."

"I told you," Fleur sighed, "I am not a pet."

"I got you in a pet store so you're a pet," Harry said stubbornly. He finally had a companion and he was not going to let her go.

"His logic is impeccable daughter," Madame Delacour said with a smile. She turned to address the boy, "would you care to get something to eat?"

"Can I?" Harry asked in excitement. "Come on Fleur, let's go get something to eat."

"I would like to talk with Fleur while you are eating," Madame Delacour said quickly. Upon seeing his hesitant look she decided to add, "do not worry, no one will take Fleur away."

"It is okay 'arrie," Fleur prompted him.

"Okay," Harry agreed slowly. One of the maids took his hand and began leading him out the door.

"Be sure to give him a bath," Madame Delacour added to their retreating backs, "and get him some new clothing." She turned back to her daughter. "I assume you can explain this daughter?"

Indeed she could, Fleur spent the next few hours explaining to her parents what had happened, spending extra time expounding on the roles of two particular individuals and speculating on their parentage.

"Fudge and Umbridge," her father growled, "I'm sure of it. To think they would . . . never mind that now. Rest assured that I will see them punished for the crimes they committed against you my daughter."

"Thank you father," Fleur said with a happy smile. "Now if you will excuse me, it has been a long day and I would like to get to bed."

"Good night daughter," her mother said with a smile, "and pleasant dreams. 'arrie is already waiting for you in your room."

"Mother?"

"He was quite insistent that he had to sleep with his pet," the woman said, "and how could I say no to such an adorable face?"

AN: Just popped into my head, Delacours on the brain. Suppose I could have added a scene where young Gabrielle demanded that she get a pet too and she wants a pet Harry.

Omake: Different Compartment

"Is it okay if I sit here?" Harry asked nervously, he'd opened the first compartment he came to and found it full of several older girls.

"He's just soooo cute," the pink haired one squealed, "come in here and sit on big sister's lap." She pulled Harry into her lap and pushed his face into her (currently) massive cleavage. "What's your name?"

"Mumph."

"What was that?" She loosened her grip just enough to let Harry breath normally.

"Harry," he replied, "Harry Potter."

"I'm Tonks," she introduced herself, "and this is Cleo, Sandy, and Maxine."

"Nice to meet you," Harry said politely.

"We're all in Hufflepuff," Tonks continued, "and I'm fairly sure that you and I are cousins."

"Really?" Harry said hopefully. "I have family aside from the Dursleys?"

"Who are the Dursleys?" Tonks asked curiously. The explanation that followed enraged the group of girls who resolved to do everything in their power to erase the poor boy's bad memories . . . starting with the entire family Dursley. "You poor thing," Tonks sobbed as she showered Harry's face with kisses.

"Don't hog him," Sandy growled. She pulled Harry into her own lap and gave him a large sloppy kiss on the cheek. "Don't worry, we're gonna make everything better."

"Hey Cleo." Tonks motioned the other girl closer.

"Yeah?"

"There any firstys that came from Hufflepuff families?" Tonks whispered. "With a last name that starts with a letter before 'P.'"

"Bones," the other girl said immediately, "Susan I think."

"Thanks," Tonks whispered back. She raised her voice, "I'm gonna go get us some snacks. Do you have any requests Harry?"

"I've never had any snacks before," Harry said honestly. This of course set off another round of sobbing and kissing, Harry never noticed when Tonks slipped out in the confusion.

Nymphadora (say my first name and die) Tonks had never been as angry as she was at that minute. The second she got to Hogwarts she was going to send off letters to her mother and future boss complaining about Harry's treatment and asking why nothing had been done to improve it. It was inexcusable that anyone be treated the way Harry had been much less a relative. And if this was the sort of then that the Department of Magical Law Enforcement allowed to happen, well then Tonks was going to have to rethink her application.

The two first year girls looked up as Tonks entered their compartment. "Is one of you named Bones?" The older girl asked.

"I am," Susan agreed, "and this is my friend Hanna Abbot."

"Wonderful," Tonks said with a grin, "I need your help."

"With what?" Susan asked.

"Here's the situation," Tonks began. The two younger girls frowned as the metamorph explained what had happened to Harry over the course of his short life and those frowns turned to smiles as she explained her plan. "That's it," Tonks said as she finished up, "are you two on board?"

"Of course," Hanna said.

"We're Hufflepuffs," Susan agreed, "er . . . I mean we will be."

"Great," Tonks cheered.

IIIIIIIIII

"Potter, Harry." Every eye in the Great Hall fixed on Harry as he walked up and put the Hat on his head.

"Interesting," the Hat muttered. It took a moment to consider the Abbot girl's threats and the Bones girl's offers. "But if they want you then who am I to say no?" Its voice raised so that the entire Great Hall could hear its judgement, "Hufflepuff Girl's Seventh Year Dormitory."

"What?" Minerva squawked.

"What does this mean?" Dumbledore demanded, for once the twinkle in his eye wasn't present.

"Exactly what it sounds like," the Hat replied, "he'll be bunking with the seventh year Hufflepuff girls. Next."

"Lucky bastard," Fred muttered.

"Wish we'd thought of that," George agreed. Silently, and with a few variations, a good portion of the upper year males agreed.

AN: An idea that's been bothering me for a while. Would have gotten written sooner but I couldn't think of any threats or offers to make to the Sorting Hat, in the end I just skipped that scene.



Addition by David Brown

Later on...

"But Tonks, there are six of us, but only five beds."

"Then we'll have to share. That's your first lesson about Hufflepuff. Hufflepuffs share, Harry. And tonight, I'm sharing with you. Now, where are your pajamas?"

"Haven't got any. The Dursleys never spent any money on me."

"Well, you're a boy, so it just wouldn't be right for you to wear mine. So we'll all have to go without. Right, girls?"

"So say we all!"

That night, young Harry slept the best sleep he had ever had. And he had pillows. He had never had a pillow before, and now he had two. As Harry returned to consciousness in the morning, he decided that the pillows had to be magical. They were warm, and they made soft noises in the night.

Couple Omake for Henching

Chapter 85 of 'Odd Ideas'

Omake for Henching by Taren

Voldemort was sitting on his throne watching his Death Eaters take turns casting the new and improved curses Bella had found. The moaning, screaming and writhing was almost as good as the Crucio he used, and the victims lasted much longer before passing out. Lounging back in his throne with a lazy grin on his face, he gestured for his most favored servant to rise.

"Bella what's today's correspondence?"

Bella rose from her knees wiped the spittle from her face and opened the ornate envelope on the side table. "It appears to be a cease and

desist order my Lord," she said, "stating that you may no longer use the term 'lord' in your exalted name."

"What?" Voldemort screamed. "Let me see that."

"It also states that you may call yourself a Dark Drag Queen but only after paying the fines for calling yourself a Lord and paying the fees to . . . master?" Bella didn't like the look on her Lord's face.

"Cacu. . ." he cut off when another envelope arrived. While Bella sighed in relief, the Dark Lord opened the envelope and read the missive inside. "Harry Potter changed to a union nemesis?" He said in shock. "No longer allowed to . . . CACUMEN"

Bella shuddered for a moment before collapsing to the floor moaning and writhing.

Omake for Henching by cloneserpents

Warning: Naughtiness ahead! Implied oral sex and multiple partners. I suggest that you skip this message if you get offended by such things.

Slowly, Harry's eyes opened. The last thing he remembered was walking down the hall after Double Transfiguration, then a bright red light enveloped him. He found himself, now, in one of the castle's many unused classrooms, bound by invisible ropes to the chair at the instructor's table.

"Ah, you've finally woken up, Mister Potter," Hermione drawled out. The way she said 'Mister' told Harry that such an important title shouldn't be abbreviated into 'Mr.'. Her face was a mask of superiority and contempt. The brunette stepped before Harry, cradling Crookshanks in her arms, stroking his orange fur.

"Hermione, what's going on –" he began to ask. "Oh, have you started arching me?"

"Yes," she replied, a bright smile broke through her stern appearance. "This is my first sanctioned attempt on your life!" she said with excitement.

"Brilliant, give me a mo'," he requested. After taking a calming breath to center himself, Harry slipped into character: the hero captured by the villain. "You'll never win, you vile witch! Your fiendish ploy won't succeed!" he said, defiantly.

"Ah-ha, Mister Potter, that is where you are wrong. There is no escape for you!" Hermione stated, returning to her character. "In a few moments' time, my deathtrap will spring and you will be no more."

"Wait a tic, no one said anything about a 'deathtrap,'" protested Harry. "I know you're my union nemeses now, but that doesn't mean you have to try and kill me for real. I thought we agreed you'd just pretend to try to kill me."

"Don't worry, Harry," assured Hermione. "The deathtrap is a week's load of Snape's laundry hanging over your head. It's triggered to dump on your head, nothing sinister or fatal, I promise."

"Err, Snape's laundry," a very worried Harry said, looking up at the basket dangling over his head, ominously. The thought of the greasy potions master's unmentionables cascading down upon him sent chills through the young wizard.

"Again, don't worry, Harry. My henchmen and I cleaned the clothes five times," Hermione said. "It may be a deathtrap, but dumping that git's dirty laundry on your head would be too damn cruel. Even if I really did want to kill you, I couldn't do something that foul."

"Oh, thank God."

"Now, if you don't mind, let's get back into character," continued Hermione. "The union has some very strict guidelines and I must gloat over your impending doom. They call it 'monologuing.'"

Harry cleared his throat and announced, boldly, "You vile witch! You'll never get away with your fiendish plan."

"You've already used 'vile' and 'fiendish,'" Hermione pointed out. "It works better if you use different adjectives and descriptive words."

"Sorry, but I'm new at this," returned Harry.

"True, it's a learning experience for both of us," the brunette agreed. "I'll buy you a thesaurus."

"Back to my monologue," continued Hermione. Stroking her cat, Hermione said in a condescending sneer that would've made the owner of the basket of clothes hanging over Harry's head proud; "Once you're gone, Mister Potter, no one will be able to stop my nefarious plan –"

"Oo-ho, 'nefarious' is a good one," interrupted Harry, making a mental note to use that descriptive word the next time.

Ignoring the disruption, Hermione forged ahead in her villainous rant; "My plan to take over the world will succeed! Without you to meddle and interfere, no one can –"

Once again, Hermione was interrupted. This time it was the sound of a zipper being pulled down that halted the brunette's planned speech. While Harry's eyes shot wide open and his face turned a brilliant red, Hermione huffed in indignation; "Luna."

"Yes, Lady Granger," Luna's disembodied voice came from the space under the table.

"I thought you were going to have Harry seduce you, not the other way around," she said.

"To be honest, that would be a waste of time, my Lady," Luna said from her hiding place, clearly between Harry's legs. "We both know that Harry's handsome, brave and dashing. So it goes without saying, that he would seduce me effortlessly. Therefore, I came to the conclusion that it would be pointless for Harry to seduce me because the outcome was guaranteed and I should pass over the unnecessary seduction and just hop right into the down and dirty act."

"Luna, there are rules and procedures we must follow," explained Hermione. "As you, yourself, stated, it is one of your more important duties as my evil assistant to be seduced by my nemeses. You can't just skip over these important rules just because Harry's handsome, dashing, and brave."

"You can add 'very well endowed' to that list, as well," amended Luna and Harry's blush deepened.

"Really? How well endowed?" asked Hermione.

"Vrree whal indowket, Waddy Grangrr."

"Luna, it's impolite to speak with your mouth full," Hermione lectured. After chewing on her lip, she announced; "Well, I'm sure there's a 'well endowed' loophole somewhere in the guidelines."

Hermione marched to the door, opened it a crack, and ordered Neville, who was standing watch outside the classroom; "There's been a change of plans, Dungeon Master."

"Yes, my Lady."

"Set up a number three-dash-nine-four in the hall to go off at sunrise tomorrow," commanded Hermione.

After quickly checking his notes on Hermione's numerous master plans, backup plans, and backup-backup plans, Neville said, "Right away, ma'am."

Before closing the door, Hermione handed her cat to her henchman, ordering "And take care of Crookshanks, too. He needs his supper and he likes his ears scratched after eating."

She closed the door and sauntered over to Harry, who was now sweating profusely. The brunette waved her wand and the basket of clothes over the young wizard's head disappeared. "Such a deathtrap is not fitting for you, Mister Potter," Hermione spoke over the wet sucking sounds emanating from under the desk. "My minions are erecting a heinous trap in the hall, Mister Potter. It's a ward that I created called 'The Pathway of a Thousand Playful Pinches.' Come morning, if you haven't escaped my clutches, you

will be forced to endure those 'Playful Pinches.' You will be doomed to suffer tiny, pinches if you cannot free yourself. Some might even leave small welts."

"And how, ah, can I escape this, ah, evil t-tr-ap?" he asked, struggling to remain coherent under Luna's skills.

"Well, you'll just have to get through me," Hermione said, and let her robes fall from her shoulders.

"Whk ahbut mhk?" sounded the blonde under the desk.

"And you'll have to get through Luna, too," added Hermione as she unbuttoned her blouse. "And, by the time you've dealt with my evil assistant, I'm sure I will have recovered and you'll just have to go through me once again."

"You're a whole lot better nemesis than Voldemort!" cheered Harry.

Disclaimer: Your standard Harry goes to a dimension where his parents are still alive story line.

## The Meaning of Fear

"I'm sure you're all wondering why I called you here." Dumbledore looked over the faces of The Order, no of His Order. "But first, I'd like to start off by thanking, Sirius Black for the use of his home for our meetings."

"No problem," Sirius said with his trademark 'Devil may Care' grin, "all you had to do was ask."

"I see that we still have two members missing," the Headmaster continued. "With your permission, I would like to wait until they arrive." They didn't have to wait long.

"Is it true Albus," James demanded, as he walked into the Order meeting with his wife. "Is He really back?"

"I am afraid so," Albus said sadly, "please take your seats and I'll explain everything." Lily gasped at the thought that the monster that had killed her baby had returned. "It's not clear how, but Voldemort has somehow managed to regain his body through some dark ritual. That, I'm afraid is not the worst part."

"What could be worse than that," Lily asked in a shaky voice.

"There is a Prophecy concerning Voldemort," Albus replied. "The basics of the Prophecy are that a child was born with the power to defeat the Dark Lord," Albus said gravely.

"Who," One of the members demanded.

"Two children seemed to fit the prophecy," Albus replied, "and after a bit of work we narrowed it down to one."

"For god's sake, who?"

"Harry Potter," Albus said, with a glance at the stricken mother.

"He would have been in his fifth year now," Lily said faintly. Tears were streaming down the woman's face. "If only we hadn't had Peter watch him." She burrowed into James's arms.

"What are we going to do," One of the more insensitive members demanded. "The boy died defeating him the last time, it's not like we have a spare."

"No," Albus agreed, "it's not. That's why we're going to have to do something risky. There is a ritual that would allow us to bring another Harry Potter from a world where Voldemort has already been defeated." Left unsaid was the fact that the boy may be annoyed to be pulled away from everyone and everything he ever knew, but Albus was sure that he could convince the boy that it was for the greater good and had to be done.

"You mean I could get my son back," James asked hopefully.

"Yes," Albus said with a smile, "I mean exactly that."

The Order descended into a chaotic mess as everyone tried to talk at once.

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It took weeks to perfect the ritual to breach the barriers that separated Harry's world with their own and the sacrifice of several dark artifacts that Sirius had lying around Number Twelve Grimmauld Place, but their hard work was eventually rewarded with a light show reminiscent of that seen in the world's northern climes and a lot of smoke. When the smoke cleared, they saw a dark figure standing in the middle of their ritual circle.

"Harry," Lily sobbed. She threw her arms around the stranger. "My poor baby, I missed you so much."

"Do I know you," Harry asked, with an annoyed expression on his face.

"I'm your mother," Lily explained, "or at least the version of your mother native to this reality."



"I see," Harry replied, "how did I get here?"

"We brought you," Dumbledore said with a grandfatherly smile, "I know you must have questions but . . ."

"Why in the bloody hell did you do that, you pack of bastards," Harry demanded.

"Huh?"

"Are you deaf as well as stupid," Harry asked. "What in the hell is wrong with you lot, that you think it's okay to drag me out of my home and drag me to another bloody reality? And why the hell am I younger?"

"We had to," one of the Order members tried to explain, "you're the only one that can defeat 'you-know-who.'"

"Who?" Harry asked with a smirk.

"Uh . . ." the Order member stammered trying to avoid saying the name.

"Voldemort," Dumbledore sighed.

"That answers the first question," Harry said calmly, "what about the second?"

"You're not this age normally," Dumbledore asked.

"I'm about twenty years older than this," Harry replied, "at a guess."

Harry really wasn't all that pleased with being in his mid teens again. Puberty was bad enough the first time without adding on an encore.

"Wonderful," Dumbledore said with a smile, "I must admit that I had reservations with the idea of sending a child into battle."

"Wow," Harry said with a grin, "you're just as big a bastard as your counterpart, aren't you?"

"Harry you must . . ."

"Send me back," Harry interrupted.

"I'm afraid that I cannot do that," Dumbledore said with a look of regret. "Cannot, not will not," he said quickly, "alas I do not know how or even if such a feat is possible."

"Are you willing to swear an oath on your magic to that effect," Harry asked, having expected that response and curious as to whether the old bastard was screwing him over on purpose or accident.

"Of course," Dumbledore agreed. The Headmaster complied with Harry's demand and regarded him with a look of expectation. "I trust that you are satisfied?"

"Not even a little," Harry replied, "and as for this idea of yours that I'm going to fight Voldemort."

"Yes?"

"Not on your bloody life," Harry said with a wave, "I don't have a reason to get my hands dirty here and as far as I'm concerned he can have this godforsaken island. Where's the exit?"

"You'd really let him do whatever he wants," Lily asked in shock. This wasn't really her son was it?

"Why should I care," Harry asked. "I don't have any reason to fight him, he may be a bastard but he's never done anything to me or mine. If there's anyone in the world that I've got a grudge against it's the people in this room, you lot kidnapped me and now you expect me to fight your war for you? What cheek."

"How can we convince you to stay and help us," Dumbledore asked quickly, hoping to persuade the stranger.

"What's in it for me?"

"What," Dumbledore asked in shock.

"I said what's in it for me," Harry said patiently, "you've already explained what you get out of this. I want to know why I should deal with your little Dark Lord problem."

"Voldemort is an evil man," Dumbledore explained, "one who can not be allowed to . . ."

"Blah, blah, blah," Harry groaned. "Don't care and I don't see why I should."

"You'd really let innocent people die," Dumbledore said in shock, time for the emotional blackmail. "What will your parents . . ."

"Yes I would," Harry interrupted, "and don't care."

"What do you want?"

"What do you got," Harry countered with a devilish smile. It took hours, but Harry was eventually able to get the Order to bend to his demands, he did have them over a barrel after all.

"It may take me a couple weeks to gather all the gold and items together," Dumbledore said as they signed the contract.

"You can have three," Harry said magnanimously, "but I'm going to want the Sword of Gryffindor right away." It was the perfect thing to decorate an umbrella stand and Harry did not want his new house to be without one for long. "By the time you get my house ready would be nice."

"I'll see what I can do," Dumbledore agreed, glad that the boy was eager to get into the fight.

"Now if you will excuse me," Harry said, "I'd like to spend some time in the library . . . unless Sirius objects of course."

"Get right to it," Sirius said with a wave, "the dangerous books should all be locked up, they're also marked with a yellow dot on the ends."

"Thanks," Harry said. He knew what he was going to pull down first. They all waited until the young man was out of the room and out of earshot before continuing with their meeting.

"So he was just bluffing?" Molly asked hesitantly. "He just wanted to make sure that we'd give him the tools he needed to win?"

"So it seems," Dumbledore agreed. He was more than a bit disturbed by some of the things Harry had demanded and more than a bit confused by some of the others. Why in god's name did the boy want him to fill the Great Hall with cottage cheese anyway? Was it just that he took after his father and couldn't resist the idea of getting the Headmaster to pull a prank for him? And where in the hell was he supposed to find a two ton wheel of cheddar cheese? He pulled his thoughts back to the matter at hand, "I think we need someone to watch this young man," Dumbledore said to the assembled Order, "to stay with him and to hopefully bring him back to the light." And to put him firmly on our side, Dumbledore added mentally. They stared back at him for a few moments. "Anybody?"

"I'll do it," Lily offered, eager for a chance to get to know her son.

"Wonderful," Dumbledore said with a smile, "I believe that you can find him in the library."

"You sure about this, Lily," James asked in a low voice.

"You don't have to worry about our son stealing me away from you," Lily said with a coy smile, "I'm not one of your purebloods."

"That's not what I meant," he said with a grin.

"I'm sure I'll be fine," Lily responded. She walked up the stairs and found Harry perusing what appeared to be a book on the Dark arts. "You really shouldn't be reading that," Lily said as she flopped down beside him, "it'll rot your brain."

"I removed that curse before I opened it," Harry said absently, "something I can do for you?"

"It really would have rotted your brain," Lily asked in shock. "I thought Sirius was joking."

"The author figured that anyone that didn't know how to get around the curse didn't have sufficient knowledge of the Dark Arts to read his book," Harry explained.

"Oh." Lily took a few moments to absorb that tidbit of knowledge. "Then how were you able to read it?"

"I have more than a passing familiarity with the Dark Arts," Harry replied, "why do you ask?"

"It's not good to have dealings with that sort of magic," Lily said righteously.

"Really," Harry asked with a condescending smile. "What am I suppose to use in the fight you lot hired me for then?"

"There are more than enough light spells to win any duel," Lily preached, "I'd be happy to teach you some charms if you like."

"I didn't ask about a duel." Harry's smile deepened. "I asked about the fight."

"I . . ." Lily trailed off as the reality of the situation began to sink in, her son(?) wasn't going to be dueling the Death Eaters, he was going to be battling them enmass.

"Do you wanna know how I beat Voldemort," Harry asked the woman in a low voice, green eyes sparking coldly.

"How," Lily asked, almost afraid to hear the answer.

"His own followers brought him to me," Harry said in an amused voice, "they brought him to me and begged me to kill him."

"He must have been terrible to them," Lily gasped, "for them to betray him like that."

"Not him." Harry's smile deepened. "Me."

"What?"

"They feared me more than they feared him," Harry's voice lowered and she had to lean forward to hear it, "they killed one of mine and I wiped out their entire family. I killed women, children, everything that lived within the walls of their house. I extinguished entire family lines and invented new tortures and they came to me on their knees, they gave me Voldemort and they begged me to take him, promised me anything if only I would leave them alone." Harry leaned back. "That's the secret of war, there can be no civility without the fear of reprisal. The Death Eaters fight the way they do, act the way they do, because they know that no matter how bad they get there is nothing you will do to them. What's the worst they could suffer? A trip to Azkaban? I taught them different, I taught them to fear."

"You what," Lily was horrified, what had happened in the other world to shape her little boy into this monster. "You . . . you really killed innocent people?"

"Not a one," Harry said, "I wiped out people who had the bad sense to be born into the wrong family though, because they are the ones who keep the cycle going, raised to believe in their parents' ideals. Death Eaters need to learn that actions have consequences. I think my first order of business will be a trip to Hogwarts to organize a cull."

"Please no," Lily begged, "please show mercy."

"Why," Harry asked frankly. "Would the other side show mercy to us or will letting them live just insure another go around of killings and maiming in another twenty years? Mercy to the guilty is treason to the innocent."

"If you do it then you're no better than they are," Lily tried to explain, "you're sinking down to their level."

"No I'm not," Harry said calmly, "I didn't start this. The blame for what happens in them falls on them. There is a big moral difference between torturing a child to death and torturing an adult to death who is trying to torture a child to death. Frankly I'm a bit disturbed that you don't see it."

"What can I do to convince you not to do this," Lily asked.

"Tell Dumbledore that he had better start scraping together gold again," Harry replied, "if he can gather enough then I'll agree to keep the Hogwarts grounds neutral."

"Thank you," Lily said in relief.

"Until they violate that neutrality that is," Harry said coldly, "then the gloves come off." Lily gave a short shaky nod then fled the room to make her report. The others had to know what they'd unleashed on the world.

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"I will not fight with one hand tied behind my back," Harry said reasonably, "and I will not follow rules that the other side refuses to. If you want this to be a clean war then all you have to do is get the Death Eaters to follow the same rules that you're trying to push on me."

"You know I can't do that Harry," Dumbledore said calmly, "be reasonable."

"I am being reasonable," Harry replied, "if you don't like it then fire me. I'll go find a tropical island and you can clean up this bloody mess yourself." Harry's grin deepened, he really loved the clause in his contract that specified that he got paid off if Dumbledore's side terminated the contract, they hadn't objected to it at the time and he was betting that they were starting to regret it now. "Well?"

"That won't be necessary," Dumbledore said reluctantly.

"Pity," Harry said with a shrug, "that's all, you may leave now."

"About Hogwarts' neutrality," Dumbledore said hesitantly.

"Yes?"

"How much?"

"Another million Galleons and access to all of the school's facilities," Harry said calmly, "with the understanding that if any party violates the school's neutrality then I will no longer consider my hands bound."

"Agreed," Dumbledore said sourly.

"Pleasure doing business with you Albus," Harry said as he turned back to his book. He wouldn't say anything the next time the Order brought their wounded to the school's infirmary, he'd save the surprise for when it would do him the most good.

"It was all a bluff then," Lily asked in relief after the Headmaster had left the room. "You wouldn't really . . ."

"It was no bluff," Harry said, "I wouldn't have enjoyed it to be sure. The thing is . . . the thing is that when it comes down to it, I'm willing to do things that a well adjusted person would never so much as consider. There's just something broken inside me, could be a result of the way I was raised or it could just be the way I was born. Anything else?"

"I . . . no," Lily said sickly, "nothing else."

"Great." He turned back to his book. "Feel free to stay if you like." She may not have been his real mother but it was still nice to have her around, let him fill in a few more details when wondering at what could have been.

Lily stayed with Harry for a few hours that night until the meeting ended and she went home with her husband. "Just say it James," she snapped. He'd been shooting her odd looks all night and she was tired of it.

"He didn't . . . he didn't hurt you did he," James asked hesitantly.

"What?"

"Dumbledore told us what he was like," James explained, "I had monitoring charms up and Sirius was keeping an eye on the wards but you've been so quiet that . . . I'm sorry Lils, I was worried."



"Oh," Lily sighed. "I thought you were jealous that I was spending time with another man."

"He's our son, Lily."

"And you're a pureblood," Lily said primly.

"I never should have told you about great aunt Sara and cousin Ken," James said with a grin, "but everyone has black sheep in their family."

"I can't think of any in mine," Lily replied with an upraised chin.

"Vern . . ."

"Don't finish that sentence," Lily said quickly.

"Why not?"

"Because it may prove your point and that isn't allowed in this argument," Lily explained.

"Why not?"

"Because then I won't win," Lily said slowly, as if to a particularly slow child, "and we wouldn't want that now would we?"

"I don't know," James said, "I think I would."

"Then why don't we take a vote," Lily suggested, "I'll even let you take the victory if we don't have a clear majority."

"Great," James enthused, "I vote that I win."

"I vote that you don't," Lily said imperiously, "Scarlet and Violet agree."

"They're not even here," James protested.

"They gave me their proxy before they left," Lily said with a grin, "that's three to one. We win."

"I demand a recount," James said quickly, "and I dispute your proxies."

"We can take a vote on if we should accept proxies if you like," Lily allowed, "but I have a feeling that I'll win that one too."

"We need more children," James said with a pout, "children that will give me their proxy . . . how about five boys? I'm sure they'd back up their old man."

"And I'm sure that they wouldn't," Lily sniffed.

"So what had you so down anyway," James asked suddenly.

"It was horrible," Lily whimpered, "the things he had to do, the things he saw."

"It's okay Lils," James said as he pulled his wife into his arms, "everything is going to be okay."

"I don't know James," Lily sobbed, "I don't think anything is ever going to be okay ever again."

IIIIIIIIII

Back at the top secret Headquarters of the Order of the Phoenix, Harry was having a conversation with the Order's fixer and all around scum bag.

"You want me to get you a leather blacksmith apron," Dung asked in confusion. "Why?"

"Because one must not forget the element of theater," Harry replied with a smile, "one must provide the proper environment if things are to flourish."

"Uh?"

"Plants need soil," Harry explained, "people like me need to appear in costume."

"Alright then," Dung said in a tone of false confidence, "anything else?"

"I've got a small shopping list of tools I'd like to get from the muggle world," Harry said eagerly, "used and dirty if possible."

"Right," Dung agreed, "no problem."

"Dirty doesn't mean broken," Harry said as the man was about to leave the room, "covered in encrusted grease would be good and I want any cutting edges to be perfect."

"Got it."

"Thank you."

Dung returned a few hours later with a large package which he presented to Harry with a flourish.

"That all of it," Harry asked.

"Everything," Dung agreed, "need anything else?"

"Not for now thank you," Harry said, "do you have a list of your expenses?"

"Yep," Dung agreed, "right here."

"Did you make sure to pad it," Harry asked as he went through the package.

"Er?"

"Part of my agreement with Dumbledore was that he was to take care of expenses," Harry explained, "I don't care how much you over charge. In fact, put in another twenty Galleons for services rendered."

"I believe that I'll do just that," Dung said in a voice filled with wonder, "thanks lad."

"No problem," Harry replied, "fair warning."

"Yes?"

"I caught you stealing from me in the last world," Harry said, "it took you fifteen hours to die."

"Eep."

"I know a lot more about my trade now than I did back then," Harry finished, "remember that. Either don't rob me, or don't get caught."

"You got nothing to worry about from me," Dung said hastily making a mental note to make sure that all his thieving came out of Dumbledore's pockets.

"Glad to hear that," Harry said. "Again, I really appreciate how quickly you were able to get these things to me. Might want to give yourself a little bonus for that."

"Right," Dung agreed. He waited until the boy turned his attention away before attempting to covertly remove a few small items from his pocket.

"Yes I noticed that you lifted those," Harry said, "no I'm not going to kill you for it . . . this time."

"There won't be a next," Dung promised. He didn't take his eyes off Harry as he backed out of the room.

IIIIIIIIII

Lily awoke that morning feeling a bit better than she had the day before and optimistic that she'd be able to forge a relationship with her 'offspring.'

"I'm going to the Order James," Lily called over her shoulder.

"I'll meet you there in a bit," James called back.

"No kiss?"

"Uh . . . you don't want any part of what I'm doing right now," his voice echoed from the loo.

"Eeew," she squealed, "you're disgusting." She threw a handful of powder into the fireplace and dove through before he could reply. Lily found Harry in one of the house's many unused rooms arranging tools into neat lines on a table.

"Fixing something," She asked with a grin.

"Arranging the stage," Harry replied, "you need to have things just right before you begin."

"Where'd you get the dentist's chair?"

"It's not a dentist chair," Harry said as he straightened out a pair of pliers, making it parallel to the tool next to it. "It is similar though," he allowed, "and I built it."

"Where'd you learn to make furniture," Lily asked. She was impressed, most magic users didn't bother learning a craft. "Is it a hobby?"

"No," Harry said as he put on his new apron, "it's another skill I picked up for the job."

"What are you going to do with all this stuff," Lily asked nervously.

"I got a Death Eater in the closet," Harry replied, "I'm going to strap him into the chair and wring every bit of knowledge out of his mind."

"So this is all to scare him into thinking that you're going to torture him," Lily said with a nod, "I get it."

"And then I'm going to torture him until he talks and spills everything he knows," Harry added, "I find that the theater puts them in the proper frame of mind. Wouldn't want them to get disappointed that I didn't set things up right would we?"

"Torture is unreliable," she protested, "you can make someone say anything with it."

"Yes," Harry agreed, "unfortunately for him, everything includes the truth. I'd use other methods if I had the time and if he weren't a Potions master." Harry gave a what can you do shrug.

"Professor Dumbledore would never allow this," she tried another track.

"Then it's quite fortunate that he isn't here to stop me then isn't it," Harry asked. "and thanks to the agreement he signed he really doesn't have a say in it anyway, so the point is moot."

"I . . ."

"Why don't you wait outside," Harry suggested gently. "This is going to be quite messy."

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Albus reached into the secret compartment in his desk to withdraw one of his 'special' pensive memories containing someone's memories of one wonderful summer spent working as a telegraph boy in a house off the Tottenham Court Road.

Humming in delight, Albus retired to his private chambers for a bit of well earned rest and relaxation.

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"You know Severus," Harry said easily as he looked over his tools, "there are twenty seven bones in the human hand? It's a common enough threat to make to someone in your situation. Not only is there the promise that I will break them all one by one, there's also the fact that you will be crippled and unable to hold a wand or practice your craft after each and every one is shattered."

"You won't do that to me Potter," Snape sneered, sure that the boy didn't have the guts.

"No I won't," Harry agreed, "I always preferred feet myself. There are twenty eight bones in the foot if you include the sesamoid bones at the base of the big toe, twenty eight is one more than twenty seven."

And I suppose the fact that any competent healer can deal with shattered bones rather easily takes away the threat of being crippled," Harry added thoughtfully, "really takes away some of the threat of broken fingers in my opinion." Harry reached down and selected a pair of bolt cutters. "Happily, amputation remains an option."

"You can't," Snape screamed. The man had finally been convinced that the boy was capable of doing the things he'd been threatening. "Albus would never let you."

"He's not here," Harry replied as he put Snape's right thumb between the cutting blades. "Just you, and me." Snip

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Lily ran to the nearest fireplace and threw in a handful of floo powder. "Hogwarts Headmaster's office," she screamed, "Albus I need you now." She counted off nearly twenty precious minutes before the Headmaster's face appeared in the flames.

"What is it Lily," he demanded.

"Harry has a Death Eater," Lily replied, "and he's planning to torture the prisoner to get information."

"You were right to bring this to my attention," Dumbledore assured the distraught woman, "move back I'm coming through."

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"I think we made some real progress here Severus," Harry said as he washed the blood of his hands, "and I want you to know that I appreciate the way you chose to take me into your confidence like this." Snape just moaned weakly in reply.

"Stop this at once," Albus screamed as he burst into the room, "my god, Severus."

"Good afternoon Headmaster," Harry said with a grin, "how are you today?"

"What have you done," Albus asked in horror.

"Nothing much," Harry replied, "just a short conversation with our friend here. You should really think about killing him by the way," Harry added idly, "just a suggestion really but you did ask me to give you my input."

"You can't just . . ."

"You took me from my nice comfortable home with the only true friend I had," Harry interrupted, "and you asked me to fight your war, a war I had already won. I am fulfilling your request, you have no right to complain about how I do it."

"I didn't mean this," Albus said, "never this."

"Should have spelled it out in our agreement then," Harry replied cheerfully. "Incidentally, you wouldn't happen to know if the found a way to regrow teeth in this dimension do you?"

Dumbledore didn't reply in favor of rushing his friend out to get a large amount of emergency surgery.

IIIIIIII

Luna's life had gone downhill in the days since Harry had disappeared and it was only the thought that he was alive somewhere that kept her from hunting down and slaying anyone and anything that might be responsible. After all, it wouldn't be polite to take Harry's kills without asking.

After a bit of 'rigorous questioning', well from their point of view not her's, a couple of Luna's 'contacts' in the Department of Mysteries managed to solve the puzzle of Harry's disappearance and, they hoped, develop a way for Luna to join him, far far away from them.

She spent the next few hours closing Harry's accounts and gathering his things, hoping that Harry would be pleased enough by her initiative to reward her . . . or annoyed enough by her presumption to punish her. She wasn't picky.



She could always have asked him to do so, but where would be the fun in that?

IIIIIIII

Harry was sitting in the library and doing his best to ignore the accusing looks that his 'mother' kept shooting him, when he felt a great disturbance in the wards.

"Something just broke through the wards," Harry said as he sprang to his feet and bolted down the stairs, "it's in the back." The two of them burst into the backyard to find an odd looking blond girl with a look of serenity on her face.

"Harry," Luna sighed breathlessly, "I knew I'd find you."

"Luna," Harry said with a blinding smile, "how did you get here?"

"There are still those who remember you in the Department of Mysteries," Luna replied. The girl dropped to her knees and kissed the back of his hand, gazing up at him with a look of adoration.

"Who is she," Lily asked, eager to know anything about her 'son's' past.

"This is Luna Lovegood," Harry said with a fond smile, "my last and most faithful follower."

"Lovegood," Lily asked. "I think I know your parents, but their daughter . . ."

"I expect I died here," Luna interrupted, "was Neville the one that was tortured into insanity instead of his parents?"

"Longbottom," Lily asked. Upon seeing their nods she continued, "I think he's a Hufflepuff prefect this year. I'll have to ask Alice about it the next time I see her."

"So it isn't perfect then," Luna said with a smile.

"On your feet Luna," Harry ordered.

"What's happening Harry," Luna asked with a wide, innocent smile.

"Had a little talk with our good friend Severus," Harry replied, he ignored Lily's shudder, "and he's told me a lot of interesting things."

"Like what," Luna chirped.

"Like the fact that he was the one that set Voldemort after the Potter family," Harry replied, "isn't it interesting the way some things are different, while others stay the same?"

"Very," Luna agreed.

What," Lily asked, wide eyed.

"Very," Luna repeated herself.

"No," Lily said frantically, "the thing about Snape sending Voldemort after us."

"He heard part of the Prophecy and told Voldemort," Harry replied, "payment was supposed to be you as his sex slave . . . well, if you survived anyway. Though he may have been happy with a corpse," Harry added thoughtfully. "To be honest, that wasn't one of the things I thought to ask him."

"Oh god," Lily cried, she fell to her knees and emptied her stomach.

"Does Dumbledore know here too," Luna asked.

"Yep," Harry agreed, "but he doesn't seem to care."

"Wow," Luna said, "the worlds really are similar."

"Or the people are," Harry said.

"Nature and nurture?"

"Bingo." Harry looked down at Lily. "Luna, be a doll and clean her up would you?"

"Of course Harry," Luna agreed, "I'd be happy to." Luna took Harry's 'mother' down the hall to an empty water closet and cleaned the other woman off with a few well placed charms and some water.

"Thank you," Lily said softly, "I'm sorry I just . . . when I heard."

"Do not mention it," Luna said with a wave, "I helped you because Harry asked me to and you did no more then many people would in your situation. Besides, it's not the first time I've had to clean up vomit and after you have to clean up a few lesser substances, Vomit doesn't seem so bad anymore."

"So . . ."

"Yes?"

"So . . . you're Harry's girlfriend huh," Lily asked the younger girl.

"I'm his loyal minion," Luna corrected, "and his friend."

"What exactly does that mean," Lily asked in confusion.

"I'm anything he requires me to be," Luna said immediately, "his assistant, his maid, his concubine, his loyal assassin. Anything he requires that is within my ability."

"But . . . why?" Lily was flabbergasted.

"Harry is my only friend," Luna said honestly, "and he was my leader during the war. To be quite frank, I'm not sure I could live without him."

"But don't you have any other friends," Lily asked plaintively. "Anyone at all?"

"Mummy died when I was young and Daddy was murdered by Death Eaters," Luna said calmly, "along with every other friend I ever had. Harry's all that's left for me and I'm all that's left for him. It may not be a very healthy relationship but it's the one we have."

"Can I expect to see grandchildren from you two soon," Lily asked. She winced, she really didn't want to bring up the subject of children, not when she hadn't told Harry about his 'siblings.'

"If Harry wants children then I will give him children," Luna said simply. "Unless and until that day comes, I wouldn't worry about it."

"You're that dedicated to him?"

"He's my world," Luna said with feeling, "it was terrible when he disappeared."

"Sorry," Lily said with a wince, "I guess we didn't think things through."

"Hermione used to say that magic seemed to replace common sense," Luna giggled.

"Who's Hermi . . ."

"Dead," Luna cut the woman off, "along with almost everyone else that either of us mentions."

"I'm sorry."

"So am I."

"So tell me about Harry," Lily tried to change the subject, "what made him into . . ." She stopped, at a loss for words.

"The most dangerous being in two dimensions," Luna suggested.

"Yes," Lily agreed, "that."

"Death Eaters and Dumbledore," Luna said after a moment of thought, "Dumbledore dropped him off with your sister and the Death Eaters killed or destroyed everything he ever loved. They taught him to hate, he in turn taught them to fear."

"Oh." Lily gave another dry heave. "Looks like we got back to that subject again."

"When it comes to Harry, most things go back to that subject."

"Tell me about yourself then," Lily suggested.

"I also lost everything I ever loved," Luna said, "except one thing and I am not going to lose him. Harry is the kind of man that would charge hell with a bucket of water and I am the girl that will be at his side. I will follow him anywhere, even in death. When he dies I want to be buried by his side, death mirroring life."

"Oh . . . well . . ."

"Perhaps you could tell me about yourself," Luna suggested, "or this world. It isn't all bad is it?"

"It's been fairly quiet till Voldemort came back," Lily replied uneasily, "it hasn't gotten bad yet but I expect that it will."

"Depends on how they react to Harry," Luna said thoughtfully, "after he cut loose in the old world they just sort of stopped."

"Why?"

"I don't think they knew how to deal with the transition. Predator to prey is a big change after all, especially when you've always been a stoat among rabbits."

"Guess it's a shock to learn that there are wolves in the world," Lily said weakly.

"Guess it is," Luna agreed, "are you going to be alright?"

"I just want to go to my husband right now," Lily confessed.

"Come on." Luna pulled the other woman up. "Let's find your husband then. The sooner I do that, the sooner I can get back to Harry." They found James in the smoking room with Sirius. Both men stood when the women entered the room and both shot looks of confusion at Luna, it wasn't often you saw a stranger in the heavily warded Headquarters of the Order of the Phoenix.

"This is Luna," Lily introduced the girl, "she's with Harry and I'll explain all about that later. Right now, I . . . I have some news I need to share with you two."

"What is it Lils," James asked, concerned at the look on his wife's face.

"I . . ."

"Why don't I give you all some privacy," Luna suggested as she was half way out the door. She raced up the steps and to the room that Harry had claimed as his own while he waited for the Order to get his new house ready. "Harry," Luna said as she threw herself into his arms, "I was so worried when you disappeared."

"I was more annoyed myself," Harry said with a laugh, "how are you my Lovegood?"

"Better now," Luna said as she snuggled into his arms, "I brought all your things with me."

"Everything?"

"Uh huh."

"Even my gold?"

"Of course."

"I thought the bloody goblins wouldn't grant you access to my vault because we weren't married?"

"They changed their minds when they heard what I was planning to do to them if they didn't," Luna said serenely, "it involved a cheese grater"

"A cheese grater you say," Harry said. "That's a Galleon I owe you, I never thought you'd be able to use it in a threat."

"But I was."

"One can't expect any less than success from the most brilliant witch I know," Harry said fondly.

|||||||

James looked stricken when Lily finished her tale. Granted he and Snape had been at odds for years but he never thought that the man would do such a thing, not after the Headmaster vouched for him anyway.

"Sirius," he said calmly. James felt like he was no longer an occupant in his body. "Would you be my second?"

"With Pleasure," Sirius said as he stormed out of the room. He walked down the hall and burst into the sitting room where the rest of the Order was waiting. "Get out," Sirius said harshly, "all of you get out."

"What's this about Sirius," Arthur asked.

"Ask Dumbledore why," Sirius replied, "he's the one that gave sanctuary to the man who got my godson killed."

"What do you mean," Molly asked. "The Headmaster would never . . ."

"Severus Snape sold out the Potters and is responsible for Harry's murder," Sirius growled, "bloody Dumbledore knew and protected that bastard anyway."

"I can't believe . . ."

"Get out now," Sirius shouted, "the entire bloody Order is no longer welcome in my house." Sirius was a hair away from declaring war on Albus Dumbledore and the entire bloody Order. The only thing that stopped him was the thought of James and Lily, it was their right after all.

"Does that include me," Remus asked, as the others filed out of the room.

"What do you think," Sirius snorted.

"I think I want to murder the old bastard," Remus replied, "I think I want to have him with me during my special time of the month. I think that for once I'd let the wolf have his head and I know that I would enjoy the feel of his flesh ripping and the taste of his blood in my mouth. I think that Wormtail and Snape are the only two men that I want to kill as much."

"Stay then," Sirius said in an Arctic tone, "brother."

"We should get back to James and Lily," Remus said, "they shouldn't be alone right now."

IIIIIIIIII

Luna and Harry watched the reactions as the information that Harry had ripped from Severus Snape's mind spread and divided the Order.

"Funny how she doesn't seem to mind how you got it anymore," Luna mused.

"This world is much like the last," Harry replied, "it's all about who's ox is getting gored."

AN: Polish by dogbertcarroll and Ed Becerra reminded me of a line that I really had to add.

Omake by Wild KS Phoenix

It took weeks to perfect the ritual to breach the barriers that separated Harry's world with their own and the sacrifice of several dark artifacts that Sirius had lying around Number Twelve Grimmauld Place, but their hard work was eventually rewarded with a light show reminiscent of that seen in the world's northern climes and a lot of smoke. When the smoke cleared, they saw a dark figure standing in the middle of their ritual circle.

"Harry," Lily sobbed. She threw her arms around the stranger. "My poor baby, I missed you so much."



"You! Get the hell off me you slut!! Why the hell would I want to see you again?" Harry snarled as he struggle away from the clingy woman.

"I...I...what??" stammered out a confused and hurt Lily.

"Don't play that game with me! You know exactly what you did to me."

"Harry...I..."

"Mr. Potter, you are in another dimension." Dumbledore interrupted.

"Not you too!! Avada Kedavra! Avada Kedavra!" Dumbledore and Lily fell dead to the floor as a stunned Order watched Harry run out of the room and house.

Weeks later many Order member and Death Eater alike have been brought down by an unknown third party, until he is cornered on an upper floor in a random building by Voldemort and his inner circle.

"You are the one responsible for killing my Death Eaters? A mere boy?" Voldemort said in disbelief. "Prepare to die!" Voldemort stepped forward to duel the boy but his feet went out from under him

and fell backwards down the stairs they had just climbed.

"So that's where I put my skateboard!" Harry exclaimed then snuck off as the Death Eaters started fighting over who would be the next leader. He would get them later, after they had thinned themselves

out for him.

AN: Eh, not that great but maybe it'll inspire someone else. Basically, this Harry comes from a world Lily raised him but she was more like Sirius' mother was to him. So Harry hates her and Dumbledore (plus a few others) because they were cruel to him and on the Dark side. He learned to fend for himself and what not.

Unrelated Omake: Another Harem Fic

"May I have your help with something Hermione?" Luna asked politely.

"Sure Luna," Hermione agreed, "what class are you having trouble with?"

"Do you promise to give me your help?" Luna asked intently.

"Yeah," Hermione said. The other girl was acting a bit oddly, even for Luna. "Why?"

"Then promise to help me," Luna demanded.

"I Hermione Granger, promise to help Luna Lovegood," Hermione sighed, "now what's this about Luna?"

"I would like to date Harry," Luna said with a pleased smile, "and I need you to help me find a couple other girls to date him with me."

"What?" Hermione asked dully.

"Maybe just two more," Luna mused, "that way we each have someone to entertain us when Harry is recovering."

"You can't do that Luna," Hermione said firmly.

"Why not?"

"Well, it's against the law for one."

"No it isn't," Luna said serenely, "it's one thing the Ministry hasn't gotten around to legislating yet."

"Well . . ." Hermione bit her lower lip in concentration. "Why do you want to share Harry? Don't you want him all to yourself?"

"Mummy taught me that it's not right to be selfish," Luna said richeously.

"You don't have more than one mum do you?" Hermione asked.

"No," Luna answered mournfully, "Harry's mummy married Harry's father, Neville's mother married Neville's father, and all the other potential mummies got killed by Death Eaters." Luna looked depressed for a moment. "It's too bad, maybe if I'd had another mummy then she could have helped mummy when mummy had her accident. Even if mummy couldn't have helped mummy then I'd have still had a mummy so maybe it wouldn't have hurt so much to lose mummy."

"I . . ." Hermione's eyes crossed as she tried to work out exactly what Luna said. "I'm not going to help you find more girls for Harry."

"But you promised," Luna said stubbornly, "and you can't just break your promise."

"I . . . damn," Hermione grouched, she'd known better too, she really had. "I suppose the first thing to do is to make a list?"

"Already done Hermione," Luna said cheerfully. "From best to worst."

"Hanna Abbot and Susan Bones?" Hermione asked. "Why them?"

"I asked them about it and they seemed interested," Luna said happily, "all we have to do is give them the physical exam."

"Physical exam?" Hermione asked, afraid to hear the answer.

"We meet them in an empty classroom and ravish them," Luna said with a wicked smile, "ravish them until they can't be ravished anymore."

"I'm not going to help you ravish them Luna," Hermione sighed.

"But . . ."

"Because I'm going to be busy editing your list," Hermione added quickly, "you've got a few misspellings here."

"Oh." Luna's smile returned full force. "Why thank you Hermione."

"It's . . . no problem Luna," Hermione replied in a tired voice.

"Come on." Luna grabbed Hermione by the wrist and dragged her through the corridors. "Susan and Hanna are waiting for us over here."

"Did you tell them what the meeting was going to be about?" Hermione asked.

"I wanted it to remain a surprise," Luna replied over her shoulder.

"Alright then," Hermione said with a grin. She couldn't wait to see the reaction when the two timid Puffs learned about Luna's plans for them.

They arrived at the meeting place to find Susan and Hanna waiting for them with twin looks of expectation on their faces.

"What's this all about Luna?" Susan asked.

"I just wanted to give you two a physical exam," Luna replied innocently.

"Uh." Susan looked at Hanna who shrugged in reply. "Alright, in the classroom then?"

"Uh huh," Luna agreed, "coming Hermione?"

"I'll wait out here thanks," Hermione said quickly.

"Are you sure you don't want to come in and take notes?" Luna asked.

"I'm going to be much too busy editing your list," Hermione replied.

"Alright then," Luna agreed. She followed the other two girls into the classroom and closed the door behind them.

For the next hour, a red faced Hermione sat outside the door and listened to the sounds of someone being thoroughly and expertly ravished. Maybe I should have warned them, Hermione thought guiltily to herself, and . . . oh god what if Luna wants to do this again and I don't have an excuse not to stay out of it? Hermione had known better then to make a promise without restrictions, it was one of the

first things they taught a muggle born, don't make oaths unless you intend to follow them since the consequences for ignoring them could be quite dire. Hermione rubbed her knees together as the sounds increased in volume before climaxing in a loud shriek.

Hermione waited nervously as the door opened and two slightly disheveled Hufflepuffs walked out with identical smug expressions on their faces.

"That was a nice little pick me up wasn't it Susan?" Hanna asked with a lazy grin.

"Team work beats inventiveness and enthusiasm once again," Susan purred.

"Hmga"" Hermione gaped.

"So do we pass?" Hanna asked. "Luna kept screaming yes when we asked her."

"She also said that she wanted all the girls to be in agreement before we took this to Harry," Susan added, "so what's your verdict?"

"Or would you like to give us your own physical exam?"

"You pass if Luna says you do," Hermione said quickly.

"Wonderful," Susan said with a sultry smile. She pulled Hermione into a toe curling kiss. "Then we look forward to dating you too."

"Hmwaa?" Hermione sputtered.

"Please treat us well," Hanna said as she pulled Hermione into a kiss of her own.

"Luna?" Hermione squeaked.

"You didn't think I'd ask you to help if you weren't going to be part of the relationship too did you?" Luna moaned. "That wouldn't be a very polite thing to do."

AN: Mostly wrote this with the idea that Luna lures two puffs to an isolated location and gets the tables turned on her.

Disclaimer: Yet another travel fic.

## The French Connections

Harry awoke with a sense that he wasn't alone in his room at the Dursley residence.

"Calm down Mr. Potter," a strange voice said, "I am not here to harm you.

"Who are you?" Harry asked warily.

"Your future father in law," the strange man replied.

"What?"

"My daughter Gabrielle has decided to marry you," he said with the barest hint of a smile.

"You're Gabrielle's father?" Harry winced. "Of course you are, that's what you just said."

"None of us are at our best when awoken in the middle of the night," the man said charitably. "Now then, I owe you a great debt for rescuing my youngest child."

"She wasn't in any danger," Harry pointed out.

"You did not know that," he said calmly.

"True," Harry agreed.

"It has come to my attention that your life here is . . . less than pleasant," he began, "and with the death of your godfather you don't have much chance of leaving this place."

"How did you know that?"

"Did Fleur tell you what I did?"

"No sir," Harry replied.

"I work for the French Government, more specifically the Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre-Espionnage. Think of it as a bureau of foreign relations," he said slowly.

"Okay sir," Harry agreed.

"As you are Gabrielle's savior and." He grinned. "According to her my future son in law, I have been keeping an ear open for any information regarding you. Does that explain things to your satisfaction?"

"Yes sir."

"Good, now I would like to invite you to spend the summer on my estates in France," he said, "but I'm afraid that would be impossible."

"Why?"

"As a minor child, your Headmaster would have no difficulty persuading my government to hand you over to his care. I am afraid that as a simple civil servant I lack the power to protect you from the politicians." Which wasn't completely true but it was close enough for the sake of the conversation. "Perhaps if I had more time to arrange things, but not as things are at the moment."

"Oh," Harry said despondently.

"All is not lost," he assured the boy, "there are ways around this little difficulty."

"Such as?"

"The easiest way to help you would be to marry you to one of my daughters," he said thoughtfully, "it would make you an adult in the eyes of the law and it would make it very difficult for Albus Dumbledore to retrieve you."

"Marriage?" Harry squeaked.



"A bit extreme," he agreed, "and that leaves aside the fact that one daughter is too young and marriage to the other would . . . well Gabrielle's reaction, it would not be pleasant."

"Not to mention the fact that I'm not ready to be married," Harry added.

"Not to mention that," he agreed, "so we're going to have to try something else. If you agree, I will give you a portkey, a bit of gold, and then I shall wish you good luck. The first portkey will take you to my tailor." He glanced down at Harry's worn hand me downs with a barely concealed look of disdain. "He has instructions to give you another portkey, I do not know where it goes save that it will take you somewhere in the civilized world. If after a few weeks your wandering takes you to France then you will of course be welcome at my estates."

"Thank you," Harry said.

"Please do not think that I make the offer for form's sake," he added, "Gabrielle will be most disappointed if she does not get to spend at least a bit of time with her savior before the summer has ended."

"I'll make it a point to stop by," Harry promised, "if it is at all possible."

"Good," he said, "pack up whatever you wish to take with you and I shall take the rest if you like."

"I suppose that all I need is my wand," Harry said with a smile.

"That and your knife," the man agreed, "it's best to travel light."

"My knife?" Harry asked.

"You should always carry a knife," the man advised. He dug around his pocket for a few moments before his hand emerged with a slim folding knife. "These have been made near our home in Aveyron for generations, I want you to have mine."

"I . . . I don't know what to say," Harry said.

"Say thank you and then give me a coin of some kind," the man advised, "you must never give someone a knife without getting a coin back lest you risk severing your friendship. It's an old superstition but I've always thought it best not to tempt fate. Couper l'amitié as we say in French."

"Right," Harry agreed. He grabbed a handful of coins out of his trunk and Fleur's father selected a small copper one. "Is there anything else I should do?"

"Resort silencieux vivra vieux," the man said, "it means a silent spring will live longer. Close your blade slowly and never allow it to snap closed, take care of your knife and it will take care of you. The one you have now has charms to keep it sharp and to keep the rust away, other than that it was made by a superb craftsman and it is good enough that you will be able to pass it along to your son some day as I have passed that one to you."

"Thank you," Harry said, deeply touched by the man's gesture. "I will."

"Good, then is there anything else you need before starting your journey?"

"One question," Harry said.

"What is it?"

"Why does the knife have a fly on the back?"

"A fly?" The man laughed. "A Laguiole knife does not have a fly on the back, it has a bee which was granted by the emperor Napoleon to the people of Aveyron because of their courage in battle."

"Oh."

"Or it may be a fly and the story about Napoleon may not be true," the man continued with a shrug, "who can say what the truth is but a fly is much less romantic than a bee. You may choose to believe either or neither of the stories if you wish but I would advise you to become an advocate of the bee when you visit Gabrielle."

"Ok," Harry agreed.

"Here is your portkey young sir," he said pompously, handing over the cork from a bottle of wine, "have a good vacation and a happy life."

"Thank you sir," Harry said as the portkey took him away.

Fleur's father gathered Harry's things with a couple waves of his wand, shrunk them with another, and then put them in his pocket. According to his information, the main reason that Dumbledore liked to cite for keeping the poor boy in this house was the wards. A feral smile appeared on the Frenchman's face. So logic dictated that if the wards were no longer in existence then there would be no reason for the boy to remain with his 'family.'

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Dumbledore was out of his office when the wards around number four collapsed so it was understandable that precious minutes were wasted as the portraits searched the castle to give him the news that there was something wrong with the odd artifacts that decorated the Headmaster's office. If asked the old man would have been happy to explain that he trusted people not machines, that the whirling gadgets were just a back up in case something went wrong. It was a noble sentiment, one that would have worked had every one of Harry's watchers been of the same quality as Mad Eye Moody. Therefore it was quite unfortunate that Mundungus Fletcher had been on watch that night.

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Harry arrived in a small shop filled with bolts of cloth and a hunched over old man. Belatedly, he realized the danger of trusting the strange man, hell he didn't even know the man's name or if it was really Fleur's father. Harry groped for his wand, sending it clattering across the floor to rest at the old man's feet.

"Is there some reason you decided to throw this thing at me?" The old man asked with an annoyed frown on his face. "Well?"

"Sorry," Harry said with a blush, "I didn't mean to throw it at you."

"Well then what were you doing with it?"

"I was trying to take it out of my pocket," Harry admitted.

"Bit clumsy then," the old man said with a nod, "well . . . I suppose it's a common problem at your age. You wake up every day in a different shape than you were when you went to sleep."

"I guess," Harry agreed.

"Well . . . have a seat then," he said finally, "I've been contracted to give you a new set of clothing. Something that's durable enough to last you for a while, suppose I should charm it so it grows with you." The old man pulled a measuring tape out of his pocket. "Come over here son, this shouldn't take long."

|||||

Gabrielle's father was waiting when the Death Eaters arrived. Thanks to Lucius and the Death Eaters that occupied positions in every level of the Ministry, Harry Potter's address was anything but secret. It just hadn't been worth the effort to overcome the wards, not when they had ready access while the boy was at school anyway. The disappearance of the wards changed all that.

Three Death Eaters appeared on the street in front of Harry's former residence, they'd been sent by their Lord and Master to spring any traps that Dumbledore might have set. While it was thought unlikely that the old man would discover his ruthless side, it also wouldn't have been prudent not to take precautions. They were all hard men, veterans of the first rise, murderers with countless victims. None of them got off a single spell.

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The Aurors on duty sprang to their feet when the underage monitors reported three potentially lethal charms in what should have been a completely muggle neighborhood.

"Alert the duty squad," the shift commander ordered, "I'll contact Madame Bones."

“Right.”

IIIIIIII

Albus Dumbledore finally arrived in his office and immediately confirmed that several of the devices he had monitoring Harry Potter and the wards around the boy's residence had slowed or stopped.

“Albus.” His floo lit up Arabella Fig's head appeared. “Death Eaters outside.”

“Calm yourself Arabella,” Dumbledore commanded, “and tell me what has happened.”

“My cats tell me that three Death Eaters appeared outside,” the old woman said frantically.

“Help is on the way,” Dumbledore assured the woman, “hide yourself until we arrive.”

“They're dead.”

“Who?” Dumbledore felt a stab of fear pierce his chest.

“The Death Eaters,” the old woman replied, “something killed them.”

“I see . . . I shall be there soon.”

“Please hurry.”

IIIIIIII

Amelia Bones appeared on the heels of her quick reaction force and immediately took charge of the situation.

“Who's he?” Amelia demanded with a wave at the Frenchman.

“Witness Madame Bones,” the Auror replied.

“We know he's not a Death Eater?”

“He's some sort of Frog official.”

"That's a no then," Amelia sighed, "send him over here."

"Yes Madame Bones."

Amelia watched as the man detached himself from the group of Aurors and walked over to her. "Name?" She demanded.

"Delacour," he replied.

"I see." She pursed her lips. "I've heard of you."

"And I of you."

"I thought you'd be taller."

"And I thought you didn't go around in night things," he riposted, "it seems that we have both had our illusions shattered tonight."

"Next time you want to cause trouble in my country would you do me a favor?"

"What's that?" He asked curiously.

"Do it during the day so I'm properly attired for our meeting."

"I shall try," he agreed with a laugh, "and I shall also try to wear lifts in my shoes."

"I appreciate it," Amelia said, the corner of her mouth twitched up a bit. "Mind telling me what happened here?"

"I saw three Death Eaters appear and I thought it prudent to neutralize them before they had a chance to harm anyone."

"That's it?"

"That's most of it."

"Good enough for me," she said, "you wouldn't happen to know why they're all Ministry Officials would you?"

"I would guess it's because your Ministry is full of moles," he said thoughtfully.

"I would guess the same thing," she said sourly, "thank you Mr. Delacour."

"It was a pleasure Madame Bones," he said grandly, "may I go then?"

"You may," she agreed.

"Then this is fare . . ." He cut off when several loud pops announced the arrival of Dumbledore and several Order Members. "Perhaps not quite yet."

"He doesn't look happy to see us," Amelia whispered, "I wonder why?"

"I couldn't begin to guess."

"Impressive that you could say that with a straight face."

"Years of practice."

"It shows."

"Thank you."

"Ah Madame Bones, Monsieur Delacour."

"Albus."

"Headmaster Dumbledore."

"Might I have a moment of Monsieur Delacour's time?"

"I would assume that would be up to Monsieur Delacour," Amelia said with a grin.

"And I wouldn't dream of saying no to a request from such a distinguished individual," the Frenchman said grandly. "What can I do for you?"

"May I ask what you're doing here?" Dumbledore asked with a grandfatherly look on his face.

"I'm here on a private business matter," the Frenchman replied. "A small transaction that netted me a bit of coin I believe is the correct term."

"And the Death Eaters?"

"I was only doing my duty in protecting these poor muggles from these murderous scum," he replied, "something anyone would have done."

"Where is Harry, Jean-Paul?" Dumbledore demanded.

"Seeing a tailor if the boy has any sense," the Frenchman replied, "you should have heard my daughter's complaints about the poor boy's wardrobe."

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"Well," the tailor said as he inspected Harry in his new clothing, "that is that, I suppose."

"It feels better than anything I've ever worn in my life," Harry confessed, "thank you."

"It would be a better fit if I'd had more time," the old man said critically, "you really can't do a good job with just one fitting. Well, I suppose we can get you some proper clothing on your next visit."

"I can't imagine anything fitting better than this."

"You flatter an old man." He stopped to answer a knock on the door and returned with two wrapped packages. "Your other things have arrived."

"My other things?" Harry asked dumbly.

"I sent your measurements to a cobbler and a hatter I know," the old man explained.



“Oh.” Harry watched as the old man unwrapped the two packages to reveal a pair of finely tooled leather boots with a matching belt and a broad brim hat. “Thank you.”

“Thank Monsieur Delacour,” the old man said with a wave, “why don't you try them on.”

“It feels wonderful,” Harry said with a look of pleasure on his face.

“Really?” The old man asked. “The boots should feel a little tight.”

“I just figured it was because I was used to them being five sizes too large,” Harry replied.

“Good.” The old man rummaged around his desk for a moment. “And to cap things off, your portkey and your wallet.”

“My wallet?”

“Monsieur Delacour told me to give it to you when I saw you,” the old man replied, “and he wanted me to tell you that your passport is tucked into your wallet.”

“Where is my portkey going to take me?” Harry asked.

“Any one of a dozen places,” the old man replied, “so I can truthfully say that I do not know where you went if anyone asks me.”

“When is it going to activa . . .” Harry tried to ask as the portkey activated.

“Right now,” the old man replied to the empty room.

IIIIIIIIII

Jean-Paul Delacour returned home about three hours after sunrise and he was unsurprised to find his youngest waiting for him.

“Is 'arrie coming?” Gabrielle demanded the second her father entered their home. “Well?”

“That remains to be seen,” the man replied.

"What does that mean?" Gabrielle demanded with a fierce pout on her face.

"If you love something let, it go," he said. It took all the man's will power not to smile at how adorable his daughter looked. "If it comes back, then it was meant to be."

"So?"

"So I let him go," he explained, "do you understand?"

"So when my 'arrie comes to me, it was meant to be," Gabrielle squealed, "our love is destiny."

"That's not quite . . ." he tried to say to the little girl's retreating back. "Oh well."

Gabrielle scampered into Fleur's room and hopped on the bed to wake her older sister.

"What are you doing?" Fleur demanded. "And why have you woken me before noon? I need my sleep or I may get those little wrinkles around the eyes."

"My 'arrie is coming," Gabrielle said in excitement, "and father has said that we may wed."

"Really?" Fleur asked suspiciously, sure that their father had given no such permission. "Well what if I would like to take 'arrie for myself?"

"Destiny will not allow it," Gabrielle said haughtily, "but perhaps I shall allow you to become his mistress."

"Oh really?"

"Perhaps," Gabrielle agreed, "if I am feeling generous. You are getting on in years after all."

"Why you little." Fleur sprang up and chased her giggling sister out of the room with murder in mind.

IIIIIIII

"Where am I?" Harry asked. The portkey had deposited him before a desk in a windowless stone room

"Nouméa . . . New Caledonia," the drab bureaucrat at the desk replied sourly, "papers please."

"Uh . . . right," Harry agreed. He reached into his pocket and pulled out his new wallet and passport.

"Thank you," the official said curtly. He flipped through the visa pages for a few moments and his demeanor changed for the better in a flash. "I'm sorry, sir," he said politely, "I didn't realize." He handed Harry's passport back.

"Uh . . . that's okay," Harry mumbled.

"Can I have someone get your bags?" The man peered over the desk at the empty floor. "Or anything else?"

"I don't have any bags with me," Harry replied, "but could you show me the way out?"

"Just follow the yellow line sir," he replied, "and have a good day."

"Thank you," Harry said as he walked out of the room. Curiosity overcame him and he pulled out his passport and flipped through it until he found an elaborate looking visa that covered up one of the pages. The only thing he could decipher was the acronym SDECE, what that meant and whether or not it had anything to do with the official's change in attitude was and would remain a mystery . . . at least for the time being.

IIIIIIII

Lucius felt a surge of power as he looked down at the twin looks of fear in the eyes of the bound Patil sisters. "The three of us are going to have a lot of fun together," he said in a low menacing tone. "You need to learn that there are purebloods and that there are purebloods." He took a step forward and laughed at their flinch. "Now then, where should I start?" A quick cutting charm removed a bit of fabric. Lucius froze as his dark mark began vibrating and playing a

cheerful and high pitched tone. "Curse these new and improved dark marks," Lucius growled to himself, "bad enough when they would just tell us he wanted a meeting." With a sigh, he touched the tip of his wand to his symbol of loyalty to the Dark Lord. "Yes master?"

"Potter has left the safety of his wards," Voldemort's voice hissed, "and you are the closest of my servants to his current location, he is about one thousand miles north of you. Find him and bring him to me."

"Yes master," he agreed, "I shall leave at once." The Dark Lord disconnected and Lucius turned back to the bound girls. "I guess it was not meant to be my lovelies." He reached down and gently removed the ball gags. "I shall try to return to your arms as soon as I can."

"Maaa," one replied.

"Baaa," the other responded.

"Such a shame we couldn't finish things up first," he said as he gathered his things, "I hope Severus has more Polyjuice."

Just under an hour later later the Polyjuice wore off, causing the two captives' bodies to shift back into their natural form and leaving a pair of sheep to struggle out of the clothes that had been forced on them.

Getting free and shaking off the clingy undergarments the pair shifted once more, leaving a pair of Hogwarts students to shiver in disgust.

"Crabbe?"

"Yeah, Goyle?"

"I don't think I like being sheep animagus no more."

"Yeah, but at least this is better than that time Hagrid caught us."

IIIIIIIIII

While her husband was off on another wild attempt to kill and or discredit Harry Potter, Narcissa Malfoy was reclining on a beach towel soaking up the sun's rays and admiring the scenery.

"Draco," she called out, "be a good boy and get mummy another drink." She lowered her sunglasses to get a better look at a bronzed lifeguard.

"But they're all muggles at the bar," Draco protested, "why can't I have gone with father?"

"Because your father and I decided to take separate vacations," Narcissa explained patiently, "and we agreed that you would come with me to provide a suitable escort to insure my safety." Not to mention the fact that she didn't really like the idea of her son learning the real reason why there was a ram in the Malfoy coat of arms. "Now go get mummy her drink."

"But . . ."

"Now, darling," she said firmly.

"Yes, Mum," Draco agreed in defeat.

Narcissa watched her child leave with a fond smile on her face. While not the brightest boy in the world, he was still her child. A frown marred Narcissa's face, she really had to think of a way to keep him out of that silly little club Lucius had decided to join. Narcissa's attention one again shifted to the lifeguard and a saucy smile bloomed, perhaps it would be best to send Draco to bed early tonight.

IIIIIIIIII

"So Gabrielle tells me that you gave her permission to wed her savior?"

"I'm sure that is what she heard me say my love," Monsieur Delacour said glibly.

"So what shall we do if young 'arrie arrives?" Amarante Delacour asked.

"I was planning to watch the fun," he replied, "maybe give the poor boy a safe place to hide on his visit . . . this all assumes that Gabrielle does something about her crush rather than spend the whole time blushing and giggling."

"Gabrielle is a quarter veela," his wife said arrogantly, "she will not spend 'arrie's entire visit blushing and giggling."

"So?"

"Right," she agreed, "there will also be the looks from afar and the sighing."

"To be young again," he said wistfully.

"All awkward and knobby kneed," she pointed out.

"You're right my love," he agreed, "let the youth suffer while we watch."

"And laugh."

"Of course."

"Kiss me?"

"Of course."

IIIIIIII

The first thing Harry noticed when he walked out of the government building was the heat, an English summer could not compare to this new experience. Harry undid the top buttons of his new shirt and took off his jacket, he'd wanted to experience something new and it looked as if fate had provided.

"Excuse me," Harry asked one of the nearest people.

"Yeah?" The woman said with an upraised eyebrow.

"I was hoping that you would be good enough to direct me to a place to get a bite to eat," Harry said as politely as he could.

"Eh?" She regarded him with a look of utter incomprehension "You laik som'ting to 'elp wif ze speaking of de Français?"

"Uh . . . sure, why not."

"Go downe too da mar'kit wiv da red roouf, dere be a ladie der dat can elp you."

"Thank you very much," Harry said with a smile. He set off in the direction the woman had waved with a song in his heart and a bead of sweat making it's way down his face, hoping with all his heart that this was one adventure that wouldn't endanger his life or, for that matter, anyone else's.

|||||

The tailor was sitting calmly in his shop when three Aurors burst in with wands drawn and foreboding looks on their faces.

"Stand up Frenchy," Moody ordered, "and don't pretend you can't understand less you want to suffer through my attempts to speak yer bloody language."

"A terrible thing, I'm sure," the tailor agreed with a sigh, "what can I do for you? New clothing, perhaps?" He regarded their attire with a sniff of disdain.

"Where is he?" Moody growled.

"Where is whom?"

"We tracked a portkey here," Moody elaborated, "a young boy, messy hair, green eyes, mutilated forehead."

"And an unfortunate wardrobe," the tailor added, "yes what about him?"

"Where is he now?" Moody demanded.

"I don't see how that's any of your concern," the tailor replied glibly.

Moody pulled out his badge and shoved it under the other man's nose. "This is my reason, now talk."

"May I see that again," the tailor asked, "ah . . . this appears to be a British badge."

"So?" Tonks asked.

"So we are not in a British territory," the tailor said with a smile, "we are in la belle France. You have no authority here."

"Oh really," Kingsley asked with a menacing step foreword, "why don't we test that theory."

"Alright," the man agreed. He reached under his counter with a smile. "I have just summoned the Maréchaussée who I am sure would be happy to clear up any misunderstandings."

"We'll be back," Moody growled as he spun on his heel and stormed out of the room, followed closely by Kingsley.

"Um." Tonks nervously looked over her shoulder at her retreating colleagues.

"Yes?" The tailor asked with a raised eyebrow.

"Is Harry okay?"

"Who?"

"The young man."

"He looked fine," the man replied, "quite dashing in his new clothing."

"Thank you," Tonks said with a relieved sigh, "and um . . ."

"What is it Mademoiselle . . ."

"Tonks, uh . . . do you have a price list?"

"What?"



"My father's birthday is coming up and I thought it would be . . . that is to say . . ."

"Say no more Mademoiselle Tonks," he said with a smile, "I would be happy to help you . . ." He cut off when several large uniformed men burst into the room.

"Ennui?" The apparent leader asked.

"English please," the tailor said, "I don't believe my guest speaks any French."

"None you'd want to hear," Tonks agreed cheerfully, "mum tried to teach me but . . ."

"Your alarm went off," the man said calmly.

"Yes," the tailor agreed, "two brutish men claiming to be British Aurors came in demanding that I give them information regarding one of my customers."

"Uh . . ." Tonks said with a blush. "They actually are Aurors." She looked down as everyone's attention focused on her.

"And how would you know this?"

"Because I'm an Auror too," Tonks said with a weak smile. She pulled out her credentials and showed it to the angry official.

"You do realize that operating on our soil without official permission is a crime do you not?" The man demanded.

"She is not operating," the tailor interjected, "she is my customer. Here to buy something for her father."

"I see," the official said with a flat look, "would you do me a great favor, Ms. Tonks?"

"What is it?" The metamorph asked.

"Please tell your Director Bones not to send her people to France without permission in the future," he said coldly.

"I will," Tonks agreed.

"Good day then," he said as the men exited the business.

|||||

It took a bit of time, but Harry eventually found the building with the red roof that had been recommended to him.

"Excuse me," he said as he walked in, "is someone here?"

"What can I do for you?" A full figured woman with a sultry smile asked.

"I was told that you could help me learn French?" Harry replied.

"I can provide all sorts of training for your tongue," she replied with a toe curling smile, "come with me."

|||||

Lucius arrived in the French Colony with the intent of getting his business done as fast as humanly possible so as to get back to the flocks of New Zealand as quickly as possible. He had to admit that muggles made decent shepherds, perhaps he could persuade his master to leave a few alive to tend the flocks . . . of course they'd have to be gelded to protect the virtue of Lucius's future concubines. Come to think of it, perhaps he could also keep one of the mudbloods alive to brew Polyjuice. He'd never admit it to Severus, but Lucius had never really considered potion brewing to be a noble occupation. It was messy and smelly, best left to tradesmen really.

|||||

After several hours of learning French and learning all sorts of interesting things a person could do with a mouth, Harry was ready to leave the woman's shop to find his long awaited meal.

"I never thought you could learn another language so quickly," Harry said in amazement. Feeling a bit tired after all the exercises she'd shown him to get his mouth ready for a foreign tongue.

"Only the comprehension," she said.

"So I still can't speak French?"

"You'll be able to soon but it will not come right away," she cautioned him as he walked out the door, "and not at all without practice."

"I understand," Harry said with a silly grin on his face as he stumbled out the door, "and thanks again for teaching me to do all those things with my tongue."

"The pleasure was all mine," she said to his retreating back.

IIIIIIII

"The Chief wants you in her office now," were the words that greeted Tonks when she arrived for her shift.

"Do you know what it's about?" She asked.

"I know the Chief didn't look happy," was the unpleasant reply. Tonks approached the Director's door and nervously knocked on the frame.

"Get in here now," Amelia growled.

"Yes boss," Tonks agreed.

"Now then," Amelia said in a frighteningly calm voice, "do you want to explain to me why your name appeared in an official complaint by the French Government?"

"Not really," Tonks blurted, "er . . . I mean . . ."

"I'm listening Auror Tonks," Amelia said flatly.

"We were just looking for Harry," Tonks confessed.

"Harry . . . Potter?"

"Yes boss."

"I wasn't aware that he went missing?"

"Dumbledore says that he's run off and needs to be found for his own safety," Tonks said.

"And how does that excuse my Aurors using their credentials on my time to look for him?" Amelia demanded. "And doing it in another nation no less? Did someone just forget to mention that my jurisdiction had stretched across the channel?"

"No boss," Tonks said meekly.

"What in the hell made you think that you could do this sort of thing on my time," Amelia said in a low angry voice, "that's two months pay for conducting personal business on my time."

"I wasn't on shift at the time boss," Tonks said nervously.

"What?" Amelia growled.

"I wasn't on shift," Tonks said nervously, "I had the day off."

"Really?" Amelia asked with a look of annoyance. She reached down and looked through her paperwork for a few moments. "I see, at what point did you identify yourself as an Auror?"

"The French Police asked me how I knew that the other two were Aurors," Tonks replied.

"I see." Amelia took a deep breath. "Just who were the other two?"

"I . . . don't remember," Tonks said with a wince,

"You don't remember?" Amelia asked flatly.

"No," Tonks agreed unhappily.

"Well . . . I can't say that I don't appreciate your loyalty," Amelia sighed, "and I think I can guess who at least one of those idiots you're protecting is."

"Yes boss," she agreed.

"On Dumbledore's orders no doubt," Amelia said sourly, "no comment Auror Tonks?"

"No boss."

"You may wish to rethink your membership in that little club of yours," Amelia continued. "I have the feeling that being a member might not be the best thing for your career in the coming future."

"Understood boss," Tonks said glumly.

"And what the hell is with your obsession with Harry Potter?" Amelia demanded.

"He's my cousin," Tonks replied, "aside from mum and dad the only member of my family that I'm willing to claim."

"I see," Amelia said with a nod, "I suppose I can understand wanting to take care of family."

"Thank you boss."

"I also don't believe your current partner is the right person to train a rookie Auror so I'm going to reassign you to another posting," Amelia continued. "Cataloging everything in the evidence room for example." She got up and stuck her head out the door. "Shack get in here."

"You called Amelia?" Shack asked as he walked into the room, he didn't even look at Tonks.

"Your rookie has been getting into trouble," Amelia said with a smile.

"Oh?" Shack asked.

"Even had a hand in causing an international incident," Amelia continued, "along with two other idiots who had better hope to god that I never find out who they are or I'll nail their balls to my office door as a warning to the others."

"Oh?" Kingsley's voice broke. "What sort of international incident."

"The three stooges decided to go to France and . . . well, I won't bother you with the details. The important thing is that I've decided to take a more personal interest in your trainee," Amelia said with a grin.

"If you think that's best," Shack agreed.

"In the mean time I want you to poke around, see if you can find out who drug our young idiot off into trouble."

"I'll see what I can do," Shack agreed.

"Your cover is that I'm displeased with you for some reason," Amelia laughed, "so you'll be cataloging the evidence room and in general doing all the most unpleasant jobs I can think of until you find out who did this. I figure they'll be more likely to confide in you if they think I'm doing everything I can to make your life a living hell so you'll also be on revolving shifts. Nights one day, days the next, and occasional evenings."

"That . . . sounds like a wonderful idea Amelia," Kingsley choked.

"Great," Amelia smiled. "NOW GET THE HELL OUT OF MY OFFICE YOU MORON." She winked at him as she pushed him out and slammed the door. "Did you learn something today Auror Tonks?"

"Yes boss," she agreed, "it was very educational."

"I suppose you're wondering what I have in store for you?"

"Every thought is worse then the last boss," Tonks admitted.

"You'll be working with me," Amelia said, "and I'm afraid that you'll either have to give up your membership in Dumbledore's little club or get used to the idea of making regular reports on their meetings."

"I'll give it up boss."

"Good choice," Amelia said with a smile. "I respect loyalty Auror Tonks I also approve of your regard for family."

"Thank you boss."

"Now let's see if we can find that missing cousin of yours."

"Boss?"

"Harry Potter is a British subject and a minor," Amelia explained, "so it is well within my sphere of authority to check up on him to assure myself of his safety." She grinned. "It also promises to be a dandy training exercise."

"Uh . . . about that."

"What is it Auror Tonks?"

"The French wanted me to tell you to keep your Aurors out of their country."

"Understandable," Amelia sighed, "any reason why they didn't detain you?"

"Might have been because I was polite," Tonks said with a shrug, "or because I didn't flash Freddy."

IIIIIIII

"Uh . . . could you speak more slowly?" Harry asked in slow, carefully considered French.

"I asked if you would like to go fishing with me," the old man repeated, "I'll give you ten percent of the profit and two fish if you deck hand for me."

"I've never been fishing before," Harry admitted.

"No problem," he said with a grin, "I'm not doing it for the money so you don't need to be skilled."

"Then why are you doing it?"

"To spend time on the sea," he replied, "and away from my wife. I'm not as young as I used to be so it is nice to have a bit of help."

"I'll do it," Harry agreed, "how do we start?"

|||||||

Lucius wasn't at all sure he approved of this outpost of French culture. Granted his own ancestors had come to the British Isles by way of Brittany and granted he still maintained ties with the branch that had stayed behind but honestly, the place was full of wogs . . . muggle wogs at that. Lucius's lip curled up in disgust, why hadn't the Potter boy shown the good sense to hide somewhere other than a dock? Perhaps some place with sheep? Lucius mused, not some old ram of course, but a demure ewe with a refined maa. She would of course have no trouble with Polyjuice and he'd stroke her silky locks as he gazed into her eyes.

|||||||

"Resigning from the Order?" Dumbledore asked with a stricken look on his face. "Whatever for?"

"The chief gave me the choice between quitting and making reports," Tonks explained, "it wouldn't be right to start informing on everyone."

"Why ever not?" Dumbledore said with a smile. "We have nothing to hide. Please continue your membership at least for the time being."

"Are you sure?"

"Positive," Dumbledore said grandly, "I trust that I've laid your worries to rest."

"Most of them."

"What else is troubling you Nymphadora?" Dumbledore asked gently.

"Two things," Tonks replied, "the first is that I can't go on missions any longer. Madame Bones has me on call twenty four hours a day."

"And the second?"

"Madame Bones wanted me to pass on to Moody that as soon as she decides to take official notice of the fact that he's still using his badge



then she's gonna cut off his . . . uh . . . boy parts and nail them to her desk."

"I'll be sure to pass that along," Dumbledore choked.

IIIIIIIIII

Narcissa tucked Draco into bed and then tenderly kissed her son on the forehead. "Be a good boy and go to sleep darling."

"But it's not even dark out yet mum," Draco protested.

"Mummy says that it is time for her little dragon to go to sleep," Narcissa said firmly, "does mummy's little dragon want mummy to sing him to sleep?"

"No mum," Draco said with a pout.

"Does mummy's little dragon want a story?"

"No mum."

"Then mummy's little dragon needs to stay in bed all night until mummy gets him in the morning," Narcissa cooed, "no matter what strange sounds he hears at night."

"Strange sounds?" Draco asked with a frown.

"Maybe some grunting and moaning," Narcissa explained, "perhaps some screaming. There is a ghost in the hotel," she added, "and mummy doesn't want her little drakey-wakey to get out of his room."

"But mum . . ."

"Understood," Narcissa said firmly.

"Yes mum," Draco said in defeat.

"Good," Narcissa said cheerfully, "because if mummy catches her little Draco out of his room then mummy will have no choice but to punish her little Draco quite severely . . . perhaps publicly in front of his little friends."

"I'll be good," Draco promised.

"Good." Now to go find that pool boy.

|||||

Lucius was on the dock waiting for Harry to show up when his Dark Mark again started buzzing and playing a jaunty tune.

"Yes?" Lucius asked.

"Are you happy with your Dark Lord?" A voice asked.

"What?"

"What would you say if I told you that I could get you a newer and better Dark Lord to serve for half the price?" The teledarkmarketer purred.

"Who is this?" Lucius demanded. So intent he was on his conversation that he completely missed Harry walking past him holding a pair of fish in his hands.

On the whole, Harry decided that he quite enjoyed his first fishing trip, though he did think it was bit odd the way the old man had kept complimenting his muscles . . . oh and the way the old man would lick his lips every few minutes. Harry shrugged it off, probably nothing, after all the old man that Dudley used to hang around did a lot of the same thing and no harm ever came of that, did it?

Harry continued up the dock until he saw a sign proclaiming that the building it was affixed to was the colonies' finest joke shop.

"The twins would love this," Harry muttered to himself as he walked in.

|||||

Lucius breathed a sigh of relief when the bastard on the other side of his Dark Mark finally hung up. What in the hell gave these people the right to bother him? Why in the hell couldn't they just mind their own

damned business? He really did think that these new and 'improved' Dark Marks were the worst idea ever.

Lucius's mouth twitched in annoyance as his Dark Mark began buzzing and playing a cheerful electronic tune. "WHAT?"

"Am I disturbing you Lucius?" His master's voice asked calmly. "Are you perhaps too busy to talk to your Lord?"

"No master," Lucius simpered, "I thought you were someone else."

"Hmmm."

"You're going to crucio me aren't you?"

"Highly likely," Voldemort agreed, "and if whether I stop before your brains begin to drip out of your nose depends on your answer to one question."

"What question master?"

"I just want to know why you did nothing when Potter walked past you."

IIIIIIIIII

"One book of jokes and one bag of laughing powder," the clerk rang up Harry's purchases, "will that be all?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed, "and could I get this delivered?"

"Where to?"

"England," Harry replied, "I have some . . ."

"Time to die Potter," Lucius squealed as he burst into the shop.

"Friend of yours?" The clerk asked calmly, years of working in a joke shop had made him almost impossible to surprise.

"Nope," Harry replied. He scooped up the laughing powder with one hand and flung it into Lucius's face.

"What's that supposed to . . . .bwahahahahahahahaha." Lucius collapsed and howled with laughter.

"Could I get another bag of laughing powder?" Harry asked.

"Certainly sir," the clerk agreed, "would you like anything else?"

"Could you notify the authorities to come pick him up?" Harry continued. "He's a dangerous murderer and I really think it would be best if he were locked up."

"Of course." Didn't really matter if the boy was telling the truth or if it was all some elaborate prank, the customer was always right.

"And could you direct me to the nearest travel agent?" Harry asked with a glance down at Lucius. "I think it's past time I picked up and moved on."

|||||||

Amelia was in her office when a message from the French government arrived to notify her that Lucius Malfoy had been detained for several crimes ranging from attempted murder without a license to trespassing.

"Auror Tonks," Amelia said. She frowned down at the note wondering why the hell they couldn't have printed it in a language she could understand.

"Yes boss?"

"How's your French?"

"Not good boss," Tonks admitted.

"Hopefully better than mine," Amelia said with a grin, "what do you think this word means?"

"Uh . . . tickler maybe?" Tonks ventured.

"Good enough I'm sure," Amelia said cheerfully, "when's your next club meeting?"

"Couple minutes," Tonks said, "why?"

"I want you to go there and report that Lucius Malfoy was arrested by French authorities for a variety of crimes," Amelia replied, "and that he was captured by a man known only as . . . the Tickler."

"The Tickler boss?"

"Unless you'd like to change your translation," Amelia agreed.

"That's fine boss," Tonks said quickly. Visions of dictionaries and hours of study danced through her head.

"On your way then," Amelia ordered.

"Yes boss."

Amelia waited until after her Auror left the office before throwing a hand full of floo powder into the fireplace. "Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre-Espionnage," she called out, "Monsieur Delacour please."

"What can I do for you Madame Bones?" Fleur's father asked with a grin.

"First of all," Amelia began, "I'd like to apologies for the actions of my Aurors."

"Completely unnecessary," he waved off her concerns, "I am well aware that they were not directed by your hand."

"Thank you for that," Amelia said in relief, "I'd also like to know if it would even be possible to visit your country to conduct an interview."

"For what purpose?"

"My assistant was one of the Aurors that trespassed on your soil," Amelia explained, "the polite one that is."

"And?"

“And she's also Harry Potter's cousin,” Amelia sighed, “and one of the few family members that he would claim . . . the reverse is true unfortunately.”

“And I take it that Ms. Tonks would like to assure herself that her relative is safe and happy?”

“Yes,” Amelia agreed, “and I would like to turn it into a training exercise.”

“I'll make the arrangements,” he said with a smile, “so long as you give your word that you will not force him to do anything.”

“Aside from taking him to a hospital if he were injured or something like that?”

“Aside from that yes.”

“Then you have my word.”

“Excellent.”

IIIIIIII

Tonks arrived several minutes after the start of the Order meeting and did her best to sneak to her seat without disrupting anything.

“Nymphadora,” Dumbledore said loudly, “I'm so glad you decided to continue your membership.”

“Madame Bones suggested it,” Tonks said honestly, “she said it would be good to have an unofficial backchannel.”

“Why didn't she use Kingsley?” Dumbledore asked.

“Cause the boss wants to make his life a living hell for embarrassing her in front of the French,” Tonks explained with an apologetic glance at her former partner, “still hasn't decided if she wants to . . . uh . . .”

“We get it,” Dumbledore said, “was there any information that Madame Bones wanted us to hear?”

"Lucius Malfoy has been arrested by the French," Tonks said, "Madame Bones wanted me to tell you that it doesn't look like he'll be getting out any time soon."

"Any word on how he was taken down?" Moody growled.

"He got captured by a private citizen," Tonks said.

"We know who?"

"We know an alias."

"Spit it out then," Moody demanded.

"They call him the tickler sir," Tonks said with a straight face.

"And he's French?" Dumbledore asked intently. "You're sure of that."

"Yes sir," Tonks agreed. "Reasonably sure."

"Alright then," Dumbledore said, "I want you to find out everything you can about this French Tickler and . . . Nymphadora is there something wrong?" Tonks had fallen to the ground and shoved a fist in her mouth, tears were flowing down the poor girl's reddened face as she shook, possibility Dumbledore thought, from some sort of epileptic seizure. "Poppy, could you see to young Nymphadora please?"

"Yes Headmaster," Poppy agreed.

"Looks like you'll be the one that has to find out about the French Tickler Alastor," Dumbledore said to his old friend, "make us proud."

"Oh god," Tonks moaned, "stop it please."

IIIIIIIIII

Sporting an extremely smug look on her face, Narcissa wandered into her son's room. "Wakey wakey."

"Morning Mum," Draco muttered.

"And how is my little man today?" Narcissa cooed. "Did you have a good sleep?"

"Yes Mum," Draco agreed.

"Good," Narcissa said happily, "now how would you like to go to the zoo today?"

"I'm not a little kid Mum," Draco protested sullenly, "can't I just go do something on my own?"

"Draco Catamite Malfoy you watch your tone," Narcissa scolded.

"Sorry Mum."

"Now come over here and give Mummy a kiss."

|||||||

Amelia was waiting when Tonks returned from her meeting with the Headmaster and 'his little club' as she put it. "Have fun?" Amelia asked.

"Loads," Tonks agreed cheerfully, "it was the best meeting ever."

"Good." Amelia arose. "Come along then."

"Where are we going boss?"

"On a field trip," Amelia replied, "how much time did you get to spend in France the last time you were there?"

"Only a few hours," Tonks replied, "still managed to pick up some things for dad though."

"Excellent," Amelia said with a smile, "you'll be able to show me the sights then."

"I . . . uh . . . kinda got kicked out the last time boss," Tonks protested, "they were pretty firm about the fact that they didn't want me to go back."



"Nonsense," Amelia swept aside her Auror's complaints, "I'm sure that it was all a misunderstanding that will all be cleared up after they find out what a marvelous young lady you are."

"Yes boss," Tonks agreed glumly. After a few minutes of mentally weighing the pros and cons of ignoring her boss's orders verses spending some time in a French jail cell, Tonks gave a fatalistic shrug and decided to go with the devil she didn't know . . . maybe she'd get lucky and find out that French prisons weren't so bad after all.

IIIIIIIIII

Jean-Paul started his day by watching his younger daughter run past with his eldest in hot pursuit. "Amarante," he called out.

"Yes my love?"

"Why is Fleur blue?"

"Gabrielle decided to do some decorations during the night when Fleur could not resist."

"Ah."

"Aren't you going to do something?"

"Aren't you?"

"This is much too amusing to put a stop to things," his wife said with a lazy grin, "I'll let them run themselves to exhaustion then I'll punish them by having them work the vineyards or something."

"Set them to cleaning the stables," he suggested, "that was one of my mother's favorites . . . built quite a bit of character."

"We do not have any horses my love," she pointed out.

"The stables were left dirty," he said with a grin, "and haven't been cleaned in nearly twenty years."

"Do tell."

“And when they're done I'll refill the stables,” he continued, “so that they can keep learning how to clean stables over and over again.”

“Not to mention the fact that Gabrielle adores horses,” Amarante said slyly, “and this will allow you to be a hero to her.”

“Fleur will likely pretend that she is above it all,” he mused, “but she'll also love the chance to ride.”

“Not to mention the fact that she will soon realize that fresh 'ay will be another place to have her little rendezvouses with young 'arrie.”

“Thank the gods that Gabrielle is too young for that sort of thing,” he laughed.

“Tell that to her,” his wife said with an impish smile, “assuming she works up the courage to even think about it.”

|||||||

Voldemort was sitting in his throne room when one of his many bootlicking minions came in and prostrated himself on the floor. “What is it?” Voldemort growled.

“We have discovered what happened to the team that was sent to kill Potter's family master,” the man simpered. “They were . . .”

“Did they succeed?” Voldemort interrupted.

“No master,” the man replied.

“Then I want them dead,” Voldemort snapped, “DEAD.”

“They are dead master,” the minion said quickly.

“Excellent,” Voldemort said happily. He didn't normally like it when his lackeys showed too much initiative but there were exceptions to every rule. The thought that Dumbledore had finally decided to fight the war didn't even cross his mind, nor did the thought that the Ministry had suddenly become effective. “Leave me.” The idea that a French intelligence agent had come to England and put himself in a

situation that made it possible to 'defend himself' during the attack was too ludicrous to contemplate.

|||||||

"Hello again," Tonks greeted the tailor as they walked into his shop, "remember me."

"How could I forget a lovely woman such as yourself," he replied, "who is your friend?"

"This is my boss, Madame Bones."

"Enchanted."

"We were wondering if you would be willing to tell us where the portkey that you gave young Harry Potter led to?"

"I do not know," he replied, "I made up several portkeys and selected one at random."

"What are some of the locations?"

"A bar in Munich, a good hotel in California, two places in the civilized world, surprise me, et cetera."

"I see," Amelia sighed, "I suppose I can't say that I'm surprised. Please pass on my best to Monsieur Delacour."

"I shall Madame," he agreed.

"So that's it?" Tonks asked.

"That's it," Amelia agreed.

"I'm not going to get arrested?" Tonks asked incredulously. "No time in French Prison."

"Not unless you find some way to annoy me or you're into that sort of thing," Amelia agreed, "come along Auror Tonks."

"Yes boss."

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Harry's portkey dropped him off on a secluded beach and since he could see lights in the distance, he saw no reason to worry that he'd been marooned. With a smile and a shrug, he set to gathering up driftwood for a fire. Sushi may be grand, but Harry wasn't feeling adventurers enough to try it, especially not if he had to make it himself.

A few minutes of work rewarded Harry with a nice bed of coals and a couple more saw those coals under a several inches of sand, with Harry's fish wrapped in Irish moss and buried a couple inches above.

"This is heaven," Harry muttered to himself, "only thing that would make it better would be something cold to drink."

"I might be able to help with that," a strange voice spoke up, "if you'd be willing to share your meal."

"Of course," Harry agreed.

A slim girl a year or two younger than he was and holding a couple bottles drifted out from behind the trees and sat down next to Harry. "Course you'll have to cast the cooling charms."

"Why's that?" Harry asked mildly.

"Cause I'm not supposed to use any magic," the girl replied.

"Oh." Harry pondered that statement for a few minutes. "Why not?"

"Still in school," she replied glumly.

"Ah, me too."

"Which school?"

"Hogwarts."

"You'll be fine then," she said with a grin, "have at it."

"You sure?"

“Would I lie?”

“Would you?”

“No.”

IIIIIIII

As soon as they got back to the British Isles, the stone on Tonk's super secret Order ring began vibrating uncontrollably, letting her know that there was a meeting.

“Boss, I . . .”

“Yes I see,” Amelia cut her off, “feel free to share what we learned today if you wish.”

“I'd kinda rather not,” Tonks said with a blush, “so long as he's safe that is.”

“Do as you wish then.”

“Thanks boss,” Tonks said brightly. The meeting was well under way by the time she arrived at the super secret Order Headquarters.

“Glad you could join us Nymphadora,” Dumbledore said loudly, “have a seat. We were just talking about a new Order meeting notification device. Arthur, if you would.”

“Thank you Headmaster,” Arthur said. He held up a large cylindrical object. “This is what Muggles like to call a 'Writing Pen.' It's used the same way we would use a quill . . .” He paused at seeing Tonks's hand up. “Yes Tonks?”

“That's about three times the size of any pen I've seen,” Tonks said, “in fact it kinda looks like a . . .”

“A what?” Arthur asked eagerly.

“Never mind,” Tonks said with a blush.

“Right,” Arthur agreed, “the problem with the rings was that the Death Eaters might steal them. But no self respecting Death Eater would steal a muggle item so we're switching to these. Now, we thought it might seem a bit odd if these were to start vibrating for no reason all the time so I had the boys include a little something extra.” He twisted the large pen and it began vibrating like mad. “You can turn the vibrate function on at any time.”

“What if someone asks why our 'Writing Pens' are always vibrating?” Professor Dumbledore asked with a twinkle in his eye.

“Then just tell them that they can double as a back massager,” Arthur said brightly, “it's quite good for . . .” He broke off when Tonks fell off her chair and appeared to be suffering from some sort of epileptic seizure on the floor.

“Poppy,” Dumbledore called out quickly.

“I can't find anything wrong with her Albus,” the school nurse said frantically, “we're going to have to take her to St. Mungos.”

“I'm alright,” Tonks managed to gasp between giggles, “it's fine.”

“If you're sure,” Dumbledore said with a concerned expression on his face.

“I'm sure,” Tonks agreed, “just ignore it. Please.”

“Well . . . Alastor would like to share some things he learned about the French Tickler,” Albus said slowly.

“Near as I can tell,” the scarred Auror began, “he's a bit like a muggle version of 'you-know-who' a man so dangerous that they dare not speak his name aloud. I asked a few muggles about him while undercover and half of them didn't seem to know what I was talking about while the other half told me that wasn't the sort of thing one talked about in public.” The old Auror sighed. “Hate to admit it but I don't think I can complete this assignment, just stand out too much in the muggle world what with the eye patch and the peg leg so I'm not sure I'm the right person for this job.”

"How . . . bout . . . Snape?" Tonks asked from under the table, she immediately had to clamp both hands over her mouth to contain the laughter that threatened to flood the room.

"Severus, would you be willing to do this?" Dumbledore asked. "It could be dangerous."

"How dangerous could a few muggles be," Snape sneered.

"Grand," Dumbledore said happily, "does anyone know a good place to start looking?"

"Maybe . . . maybe you could have him look in Soho," Tonks managed to gasp between giggles, "I've heard you can find . . . find the . . . the tickler in some of the shops there."

"Thank you Nymphadora," Dumbledore said, his eyes shined with concern for the young woman, "we'll take that under advisement." After the meeting, Albus went directly to the office of the Director of Magical Law Enforcement and Dog Catching. "Terrible news," Albus said as he entered, "absolutely terrible news."

"What's wrong Albus?" Amelia asked.

"You remember how I told you about young Nymphadora's little problem?"

"I remember everything that might affect my Aurors," Amelia agreed.

"I'm afraid that her fits are getting worse," Dumbledore said with a look of concern on her face, "she collapsed again in the last meeting and I do believe that she lost bladder control."

"That is serious," Amelia sighed, "did your healer find anything wrong with her?"

"Alas no," Dumbledore replied, "I was hoping that you could shed some light on the issue."

"How so?"

"Was she hit by a strange spell recently or anything like that?"

"Not that I know of," Amelia said thoughtfully, "but I'll look into it."

"Thank you Amelia."

"She is one of my Aurors Albus," Amelia said sharply, "despite of her involvement in your little club."

"Of course," Albus agreed contritely, "good evening Amelia."

"Goodbye Albus."

Tonks was still red in the face when she arrived at Amelia's office to finish up the day. She'd gone straight home for a quick shower and a change of uniform before returning to work, something she was sure her boss would be sure to overlook if Tonks ever got the courage to explain that she'd laughed so hard she'd wet herself in an Order meeting.

"Have a seat Nymphadora," Amelia ordered as soon as Tonks walked through the doors.

"Uh . . . yes boss," Tonks agreed meekly.

"What took you so long?" Amelia asked sharply.

"I had to make a quick trip home for a shower and a change," Tonks said nervously.

"Why?"

"I got something on my uniform," Tonks said quickly.

"What exactly did you get on your uniform?" Amelia asked sweetly. "And tell me the exact circumstances that preceded the soiling."

"Can't rightly say boss," Tonks said quickly.

"You can't say that you're suffering from incontinence?" Amelia demanded.



"Incon . . . uh . . . what boss?"

"Pissing yourself, you can't say that you've been pissing yourself."

"It was only the one time," Tonks said with a deep blush, "and it's not so much can't as really don't want to."

"I see," Amelia sighed, "I'm taking you off active duty Auror Tonks."

"For not telling you why I had to change?"

"For not reporting a medical problem," Amelia snapped, "do you think I like learning about these things from Albus Dumbledore? Now as soon as we can fix things I'll put you on active duty, but until then."

"What medical problem boss?" Tonks asked.

"You've been having fits, collapsing, and now loosing bladder control." Amelia said. "You don't think these things constitute a medical problem?"

"I don't have a medical problem, I've been laughing. It's not my fault boss," Tonks whined.

"Then who's is it?" Amelia asked mildly.

"Well . . . you remember that guy that captured Lucius Malfoy?"

"Yes."

"Well . . . you remember how I translated his alias as the Tickler?"

"I do."

"Well, Dumbledore decided that since the guy is French that he should call him the French Tickler." Tonks gave her boss a look of expectation.

"Really?" The corner of Amelia's mouth gave an involuntary twitch upward. "And how is this amusing?"

"Well." Tonks bit her lower lip. "A French Tickler is the name of a kind of toy."

"Like." Amelia's mouth gave another twitch. "A teddy bear or something of that nature?"

"Not that kind of toy boss," Tonks said with a look of abject misery on her face.

"Then." Amelia coughed into her hand. "What kind of toy is it?"

"A personal toy boss," Tonks said, "for personal relief."

"I'm afraid that I don't follow." Amelia coughed into her hand again. "Perhaps you could get one and show me how it works?"

"I . . . are you laughing boss?"

"I'm trying not to," Amelia said before dissolving into giggles, "oh the look on your face."

"Boss," Tonks whined, "stop laughing at me." This of course prompted another round of giggles.

"Come on Auror Tonks," Amelia said, "I'll buy you a drink."

"Sure thing boss," Tonks agreed.

"Actually," Amelia said thoughtfully, "have you had anything to eat?"

"Not for a while boss," Tonks admitted.

"Then would you like to dine with Susan and I?" She asked. "There is always room for one more at our table."

"I'd love to boss," Tonks agreed, "thank you."

"No problem Auror Tonks," Amelia said with a smile. Susan would be so happy to have company.

IIIIIIII

"Did you hear the latest news my Darling?" Fleur's mother asked.

"What is it Amarante?" He asked with a sigh.

"Gabrielle 'as explained to me why she thinks young 'arrie will need a mistress."

"Oh?" Jean-Paul asked.

"She says that 'arrie is too masculine for one woman," she replied with a smile, "I pointed out that you did not need a mistress."

"What did she say?"

"That you were old and infirm and that it was a wonder that having a half veela wife did not kill you."

"I'm not that old," he protested, "am I?"

"You have a daughter that's nearly fully grown," his wife pointed out, "and anther that is talking of marriage."

"I'm still in the prime of my life," he said stubbornly, "I am."

"Whatever you say dear."

IIIIIIIIII

Harry and his guest finished their meal with groans of contentment. "So where do you go to school?" Harry asked.

"Beauxbatons," she replied, "where else?"

"Do you know Fleur Delacour?"

"By sight only," the girl replied, "I'm a bit beneath her notice since I was five years behind her in school."

"Makes sense," Harry said with a nod, "where are we anyway?"

"You don't know where we are?"

"Not a clue."

"How did you get here if you don't know where here is?"

"Portkey."

"You took a portkey that you didn't know the destination of?" She asked incredulously. "Are you stupid?"

"Probably," Harry agreed, "well?"

"Moorea la subdivision administrative des Îles du Vent," the girl said with a smile, "that clear things up?"

"Not even a bit," Harry laughed.

"We're not far from Tahiti, better?"

"Better," Harry agreed, "thanks."

"No problem."

"You know where I could get a bed?" Harry asked. "Or a portkey?"

"Leaving already?"

"I've found that the best way of dealing with people that are trying to kill you is to stay on the move," Harry said with a grin, "and since I've got people trying to kill me . . ."

"Really?" She giggled. "I've never met someone with a price on their head before. I'm Adélaïde Beauchamp."

"Harry Potter."

"Oh," she squeaked, "you weren't joking about people trying to kill you."

"Afraid not," Harry agreed.

"Well . . ." A sultry grin appeared on her face. "I'm sure that we can find you a place to sleep at the place where I'm staying."

"Great," Harry cheered.

"And we can have the concierge get you a portkey," she added, "simple no?"

"Simple yes," Harry said, "thank you."

"It is nothing."

IIIIIIII

Amelia was enjoying a digestif with the woman who was rapidly becoming one of her favorite Aurors when she felt a great disturbance in the wards.

"Susan," she screamed, "get out now."

"Boss?" Tonks asked nervously.

"The wards are coming down," Amelia explained, "take my niece and get out of here."

"Afraid I can't do that boss," Tonks said stubbornly.

"That is an order Auror Tonks," Amelia growled.

"Fire me," Tonks said with a shrug as she prepared to take the fight to the enemy.

IIIIIIII

Voldemort laughed as the wards shattered. This was what he needed, this was what he was missing in his life. It had been so long since the last time he'd gone out and gotten his hands dirty so to speak and he'd allowed himself to forget the simple joy one felt when eliminating an entire family line.

"Come out and play Amelia," he taunted.

"I'm right here you bastard," Amelia replied as she dove out of one of the windows, "come get some."

"You really think you can defeat me?" Voldemort laughed. "Come now, be reasonable."

"Piss off snake face," Amelia laughed. She circled around him, forcing him to turn away from the house. "You were beaten by a one year old child, what do I have to worry about?"

"CRUICO," Voldemort screamed.

"Hah. Reducto," Amelia shot her own curse in reply. "Red . . ." She dropped her wand and started screaming when one of Voldemort's curses hit.

"Yes," Voldemort purred, "let me hear your screams." He held the curse as he approached the fallen Auror. "Scream for me." Voldemort stood over his fallen foe for a few moments, relishing the feeling of power, relishing her helplessness. "Av . . ."

"Caries pulpa," Amelia's voice incanted from behind. Voldemort screamed in pain as his wand hand began crumbling to dust. "Rumpo os," the voice continued. To the caster's immense disappointment, the Dark Lord managed to escape only moments before the curse impacted. "Are you alright Auror Tonks?" Amelia yelled as she rushed to the fallen woman.

"Boss?" Tonks asked weakly. "Did you get him?"

"He's gonna have to learn to cast with his left hand," Amelia said gently, "but the bastard got away before I could finish the job." She cast several charms to check her Auror for damage.

"I can't move boss," Tonks said. Her voice cracked a bit. "What if I'm always like this?"

"Then there will be two people in the world with my face," Amelia said dryly, "would that be such a bad thing?"

"That's not what I meant boss," Tonks protested weakly. She coughed a bit and Amelia was alarmed to see blood on the Auror's lips. "And you know it."

"Look at me Auror Tonks," Amelia ordered. Damn it where was that back up? It should have been on it's way the second Susan made her escape. "We still have the matter of you disobeying my orders to deal with."

"Don't think it's gonna matter in a couple minutes boss," Tonks said in a near whisper.

"Stay with me Auror Tonks," Amelia screamed, "I did not give you permission to die."

"Sorry boss," Tonks said as she slipped out, "guess I can't do anything right."

"Tonks," Amelia said in horror, "Nymphadora wake up." A series of loud pops announced the arrival of their reinforcements.

"Sorry it took so long chief but . . ."

"Get me a healer now," Amelia interrupted, "and get this Auror to St. Mungos."

"Right chief," the man agreed. Already their field healer was rushing to the side of their fallen colleague.

"Now then," Amelia said in a tone so sweet that it would have rotted teeth, "why don't you explain to me exactly why you weren't here when you were supposed to be?"

"Fudge came in for a surprise inspection boss," the Auror said nervously, "had us all lined up and all our equipment on the floor when the call came."

"Arrest him," Amelia ordered. Her eyes were fixed on Tonks as they carried her off the field of battle.

"Arrest the Minister?" The Auror asked in shock.

"This was no coincidence," Amelia said harshly, "that bumbling fool is responsible for the dea . . . for the severe injury of one of my Aurors

and I am not going to let him get away with it. Arrest him," she barked, "now."

"Yes chief," he agreed.

"Don't be gentle," she added. She turned and began walking away. "Call Moody out of retirement and have him and Shack on inside guard," Amelia called out over her shoulder, "and make sure everyone knows that I will personally crucify every mother's son on duty if the Minister finds some way out of that cell before I've had a chance to wring every detail of what happened tonight out of his worm ridden skull."

"Got it chief," he said meekly.

"I'll be at St. Mungos," Amelia said after a moment of thought, "have Auror Tonks's family escorted there to meet me." With that, she disappeared.

"I will boss," he said to the empty space, "damn. Why didn't I take that vacation?"

IIIIIIII

Jean-Paul came to dinner that evening and was surprised to find one less daughter at the table than there should have been.

"Where is Fleur?" He asked.

"She's all tied up at the moment," Gabrielle said airily.

"Being busy is no excuse to skip a meal," he protested, "go get her."

"She won't be able to come," Gabrielle said with an upraised chin, "she is having to diet and she will be skipping dinner and possibly breakfast also."

"And just why?" He asked. "Does she need to go on a diet?"



"She is getting on in years and beginning to gain weight" Gabrielle said imperiously, "and I for one am glad to see that she has realized that."

"Fleur," he called out. With a sigh, he rose from the table and walked up the stairs to his eldest daughter's room. "Fleur answer me." He knocked on the door and opened it after a few moments with no answer.

"Mumph," Fleur replied. She was tied to the frame of her bed and gagged with what appeared to be an old sock.

"Why can't you two girls just get along?" He sighed as he cut Fleur loose. "Is that too much to ask for? A little peace and quiet."

"I think that is a very reasonable request father," Fleur said with a dazzling smile.

"So . . ."

"Yes," Fleur agreed, "I am going to chain Gabrielle up in the Dungeon until she realizes the error of her ways." Fleur stormed out of the room and towards the breakfast table.

"That's not what I meant," he protested. They arrived at the table to find that Gabrielle had disappeared along with half the bread that had previously adorned the table.

"I suppose you think this is all funny?" He asked his wife sourly.

"I think that this is a good lesson on why doors have locks," Amarante replied, "one that Fleur is better learning now than later." She turned to address her daughter. "I believe that Gabrielle is hiding in the wine cellar if you would like to go speak with her."

"Thank you mother," Fleur said calmly as she strolled out of the room.

"Is she really?" Jean-Paul asked after Fleur was gone.

"So far as I know," Amarante replied.

"Why must you encourage them?" He asked. He held up a hand to stall her reply. "There is a situation that requires my attention."

"Come home as soon as you can my love," she said calmly. Years of marriage had taught her to accept the nature of her husband's work.

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Amelia arrived at St. Mungos and was immediately set upon by her sobbing niece Susan. "I thought you were dead," Susan cried.

"I'm fine," Amelia said gently, "thanks to Auror Tonks I'm fine."

"What about her?" Susan asked in a small voice.

"She's here," Amelia said, "we're still waiting on news."

"Oh." Susan felt a rush of relief, followed by a wave of guilt, that it was the young Auror that had been injured rather than her Aunt Amelia.

"Why aren't you with the Abbots?" Amelia asked suddenly.

"They're here," Susan replied, "but Hanna's mum wanted the Healers to check me out to make sure that I was alright and I wanted to wait until you got here."

"That's fine," Amelia said. She waved over one of the many Aurors that had descended on the lobby.

"News on Tonks?" The Auror asked.

"No," Amelia said, "I want a team from Dignitary Protection to escort my niece to the Abbot residence and to stay there until I say otherwise."

"Right chief," the Auror agreed, "you'll tell us when you know something?"

"You all will probably get the news as soon as I do," Amelia replied. Her eyes flicked to the entrance where a nervous looking couple

came in under Auror escort. "If you will excuse me, it appears that Auror Tonks's parents have just arrived."

"What's this all about?" Andromeda Tonks demanded as soon as she noticed the Director. "All they told me was that there had been an incident involving my daughter."

"Auror Tonks was injured while defending me from an assassination attempt by Voldemort himself," Amelia said with as much calm as she could muster, "she's currently in the operating theater." Andromeda's eyes flashed with rage, while her husband just seemed to collapse.

"Why in the hell was my daughter on a bodyguard mission?" Ms. Tonks nee Black demanded. "She shouldn't even be out of her probationary period."

"She wasn't," Amelia sighed, "to the question and the statement. I had invited her to dine with me, it was just bad luck that the attack happened tonight."

"Then . . ."

"I also ordered her to get out with my niece while I provided a distraction," Amelia continued in a haunted voice. Amelia gave a bitter smile. "Auror Tonks invited me to dismiss her, then took my appearance and attacked Voldemort. She deliberately distracted him so that I could get in a shot."

"Oh," Andromeda said dully. All her anger melted away and was replaced by grief. "So what now?"

"Now we sit here and wait to hear that my Auror, your daughter, has stabilized." Amelia replied. "After that I am going to tear the Ministry apart if I have to, but mark my words there will not be so much as a sympathizer when I'm done."

"Noble words," Jean-Paul Delacour said as he walked into the room, "would you care for some assistance?"

"Please," Amelia said gratefully.

"I came as soon as I heard," Jean-Paul continued, "I am so sorry to hear about your Auror."

"She's not dead yet," Andromeda said firmly, "I think you'll find that we Blacks are tougher than you think."

"I couldn't agree more," the Chief Healer laughed. Every eye in the room turned to look at her. "She's alive," she said quickly, "and stable."

"How long before she recovers?" Andromeda demanded.

"We're not sure," the Healer replied, "she died twice on the table while we were operating on her and that isn't the sort of thing that one recovers from quickly."

"When can I see my little girl?" Tonks's father spoke for the first time.

"Right now if you wish," she said, "but I should warn you. She's out at the moment and we'd rather that she not wake up for the next day or two."

"That's fine," her father said quickly, "I just want . . . I just need to see for myself that she's still alive."

"Right this way then." The Healer waved the couple out of the room.

"Shall we begin then?" Jean-Paul asked with a serene smile.

"Let's," Amelia said with a feral smile.

IIIIIIII

Ted and Andromeda Tonks were waiting by their daughter's bedside when she awoke.

"Dora," Ted whispered, "can you hear me?"

"D'n c'll m'Dra," Tonks protested.

"Nymphadora is a perfectly respectable name," Andromeda said with tears in her eyes, "and it's high time you learned to accept it."

“Mumm,” Tonks groaned, “is Madame Bones okay?”

“She's fine,” Ted assured the girl, “and she's quite annoyed at you young lady. Imagine not listening to the head of your department,” he laughed, allowing himself to feel relief that his daughter was going to be alright.

“She's also worked herself into a right fury,” Andromeda added with a grin, “I'd hate to be in the Ministry right now.”

“Guess I picked a good time to get hurt,” Tonks said with a smile.

“That's my girl,” Ted said proudly, “anything to get a few days off work . . . paid too since it was in the line of duty.”

“Really Nymphadora,” Andromeda huffed, “allowing 'he-who-must-not-be-named' to beat you in a duel just to get a few days off. I'm sure there was none of that sort of thing on my side of the family.” She gave her husband a meaningful look.

“Nope,” Ted agreed, “they'd have all been on the other side of the fight.”

“Probably,” Andromeda agreed.

“Muuuuuum . . . Daaaaaad . . .” Tonks whined.

“The healers say that there is a good chance that you will be able to go back on active duty,” Andromeda switched gears. “And Madame Bones has sent word that she wants your position as her assistant to be made permanent.”

“Minerva McGonagall has sent word that Hogwarts would like to interview you for the position of Defense Against the Dark Arts Professor,” Ted added, “better pay than being an Auror when you consider that it comes with free room and board.” It will also be safer, he added mentally. “And when prompted she added that there might be a couple other positions to fill.”

“I'm an Auror dad,” Tonks said firmly, “not a teacher.”

"I just want you to know what your options are dear," he said innocently."

IIIIIIII

Amelia and the Frenchman walked into Fudges holding cell and took their seats across from the man.

"Good evening Cornelius," Amelia said cheerfully, "how are you doing tonight?"

"You'll never get away with this," Fudge blustered, "I'll have you clapped in irons."

"I'm not doing so well myself," Amelia said, ignoring the man, "since I was attacked by Voldemort tonight. Quite spoiled my after dinner drink too when the duty squad didn't show up to give me back up. Can you tell me why you decided to conduct an inspection that just happened to delay them?"

"I am the Minister," Fudge screamed. "I don't answer to you, you answer to me."

"That's an interesting thought," Amelia said with a lazy grin, "isn't it Jean-Paul."

"That it is," the man agreed, "and it's even correct . . . in theory anyway."

"Theory?" Fudge asked sickly.

"One need only look at who controls the monopoly on violence to see where the real power lies," Amelia explained coldly.

"People sleep peaceably in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf." Jean Paul quoted. "I was always a fan of George Orwell."

"And who are those 'rough men' loyal to?" Amelia asked. "Me or you?"

"You can't do this," Fudge said in horror, "people won't let you do this."

"My dear Cornelius," Amelia purred, "I already have."

"Shall we start with soft tissue?" Jean-Paul asked. "Or do you wish to see if he's responsive to truth potions first?"

IIIIIIIIII

Voldemort bit back a scream as his pet Healer poked and prodded the gangrenous stump that had replaced the Dark Lord's wand arm."

"I'm afraid that I'm going to have to take another four inches off master," the man said nervously, "and it will have to be soon before the rot spreads too much."

"How soon before it can be regrown?" Voldemort demanded.

"It can't be master," the man simpered, "but perhaps you could give yourself a silver . . ."

"CRUCIO," Voldemort incanted. The Dark Lord was angered beyond reason at the man's presumption, and of the fact that the only reason he'd been able to create a new limb for his servant was due to ritual the man had taken part in. "That is not an option."

"I'm sorry master," the man sobbed, "there's nothing else I can do."

"Cut it off then," Voldemort ordered.

"Yes master," the man agreed, "right away master."

IIIIIIIIII

Amelia walked out of the holding cell after the grueling four hour interrogation of the Minister of Magic.

"Who would have guessed that he was merely corrupt?" Jean-Paul asked with an easy smile.

"I do not see much of a difference between betraying me and my Aurors for pay rather than ideology," Amelia retorted.

"Nor do I."

"I hate to ask it," Amelia said uncomfortably, "but we really can't afford to try the Minister for his crimes at this time."

"Not to mention the issue of sovereign immunity," he added with a smile, "say no more Amelia. I shall be happy to resolve this issue for you."

"I owe you another Jean-Paul," Amelia said gratefully.

"Another?"

"Starting from getting Harry Potter out of a bad home life and ending with this," Amelia replied, "thank you."

"Do not mention it Amelia," he said easily, "give me five minutes to clean things up here and then I will be able to help you continue your purge if you like."

"I'd appreciate the help," Amelia agreed.

"I could also have two dozen men from my department here within the hour if you like," he offered.

"That would help quite a bit," she said softly, "thank you again Jean-Paul."

"Do not thank me for this," he said easily, "my superiors agree that it would be best to deal with the rot here before it has a chance to spread to my own country."

"So it benefits us both," Amelia said with a shrug, "that doesn't change anything."

IIIIIIII

Severus Snape was not having a good day. Thanks to that simpering fool of a Auror, he had been tasked by the Headmaster to search



Soho for the man that had defeated and arrested Lucius Malfoy with one spell.

"You," Snape growled at one of the scantily dressed 'women' he'd seen walking the streets.

"What can I do for you sugar?" The Transvestite asked with a coy smile.

"Do you know the French Tickler?"

"What's it worth to you?" s/he replied.

"Here." Snape thrust a handful of pounds into the creature's hands. "Well?"

"That'll do," the man said with a deep tone of satisfaction, "book 'im boys." Suddenly the street was full of uniformed officers, large uniformed officers that threw Snape to the ground and pushed his face into the asphalt.

Severus could only think of one thing to say in a situation like this. "DAMN YOU POTTER."

Snape's situation wasn't as bad as one might first think. A first time offender arrested for solicitation wouldn't normally receive more than a slap on the wrist, the problem was that Snape didn't have the documents needed to prove his identity.

"I'm sure this can all be cleared up," Snape said in his most charming voice, one that caused the policewoman interviewing him to form an instant dislike of the oily man. Severus wasn't worried, every wizard knew how to deal with the muggle authorities, it was actually one of the few things the Ministry did right. "I'm simply a Canadian tourist that was unaware of the local laws and I forgot my . . ." Snape's mind went blank, what in the devil was that thing called? "My pisspot, if you'll just call the number I gave you then I'm sure that things will be resolved." And you fools will all be made to forget I ever existed. Perhaps he'd make a private visit later to show them all what a wizard was capable of when not constrained by the Statute of Secrecy?

"Canadian huh?" The woman asked. "Then it's my distinct pleasure to inform you that you are being expelled from the United Kingdom as an undesirable alien." It normally took months and piles of paperwork but her superiors had been willing to expedite things, she couldn't wait to tell them that falsifying the documentation to obscure the man's nationality wouldn't be necessary after all.

"What?" Snape asked dumbly.

"Unfortunately you'll be making the trip in the brig of one of Her Majesty's warships," she continued sweetly, "because of your fear of flying."

"Huh?" Snape asked dumbly.

IIIIIIIIII

Dumbledore arrived at St. Mungos and made a bee line to the room that held one of his Order members. "May I come in?" Dumbledore asked.

"Sure," Tonks agreed.

"It's a bit late for visitors," her father said with a glare at the old man.

"I won't be long," Dumbledore promised, "I just wanted to see for myself that Nymphadora was doing alright."

"Five minutes," Ted said grudgingly.

"Dad," Tonks protested.

"Agreed," Dumbledore said quickly. "How do you feel Nymphadora?"

"Call me Tonks," she said sullenly.

"Dora," her dad sighed, "it's a perfectly respectable name."

"Tonks then," Dumbledore said before the young woman could say anything, "how do you feel?"

"Better then I did a couple hours ago," Tonks said with a smile, "Healers think I'll be out of here in a couple days."

"The damage wasn't as bad as I was led to believe then," Dumbledore said with a relieved smile.

"It was worse," her father spat, "she died several times on the table." He grabbed his daughter's hand reflexively. "We're lucky we didn't loose her."

"I see," Dumbledore said, "the damage was easy to correct then?"

"Was there anything else?" Tonks asked. "How's everyone doing? Any news on Harry?"

"Everyone is doing fine," Dumbledore assured her, "no news on Harry, but I have no reason to believe that he's come to any harm."

"Good," Tonks sighed, "I'd never forgive myself if anything happened to the little guy."

"Yes . . . well . . . I'll be sure to keep you apprized of any further developments," he said uncomfortably, "and I shall be sure to have the minutes from the Order meetings sent to you for perusal."

"I didn't know there were any minutes?"

"There weren't," Dumbledore replied, his smile had recovered. "But I really don't think that Minerva has anything better to do then to arrange them to be taken."

"Thanks," Tonks said with a grin. Her boss was gonna love this. "I appreciate the thought."

"Not at all," Dumbledore said, "and unless there's something you'd like to discuss then I'm afraid I must be going."

"Can't think of a thing," Tonks said with a sunny smile, "bye Professor."

"Goodbye Nymp . . . Tonks."

"Bedtime," Ted said after Dumbledore left the room.

"Dad?" Tonks asked incredulously.

"Bedtime," he said clearly, "time for you to go to sleep."

"I'm a full grown woman and an Auror," Tonks said with an odd look on her face, "you can't just tell me to go to sleep."

"Do I need to call your boss in here to do it for me then?" He asked calmly.

"You wouldn't?"

"Try me."

|||||

Harry and his new friend Adélaïde got his Portkey from the concierge the next morning so that Harry could begin the next leg of his journey.

"Goodbye 'arrie," she purred, "I shall always look back on our time together fondly."

"Me too," Harry said with a lazy grin, "you can write me at Hogwarts after the school year begins . . . suppose you could send me a letter in care of the Delacour family before summer ends since I'm planning to visit them at some point."

"Thank you 'arrie," she said, "I will."

"See you again Adélaïde," Harry said as the portkey activated.

"Count on it," she said with a grin.

|||||

Arthur arrived at work the next day and felt as if he had stepped through the looking glass into another world. To start with, there had been a dozen Aurors stationed at the employee entrance who had ordered him to go straight to the Minister's office. Arthur took several deep breaths before knocking on the door, hoping desperately that

his fear of being dismissed for supporting Dumbledore was unfounded.

"Come in Arthur," a woman's voice called out.

"Amelia?" Arthur asked in shock. "What are you doing here?"

"I was attacked by Voldemort last night," Amelia said bluntly, "and Fudge helped him do it."

"What?" Arthur felt his insides go cold. "Is he under arrest?"

"He's disappeared," Amelia said with a lazy grin, "along with several dozen other Ministry employees. Such a shame don't you think?"

"Is that why I'm here?" Arthur's mouth went dry. "To disappear?"

"Whatever gave you that idea?" Amelia laughed. "You're here because you're almost beyond reproach."

"I am?"

"You don't honestly think that anyone believes you're a Death Eater do you?"

"You can only be betrayed by those you trust," Arthur pointed out, "and doesn't it look just a bit suspicious that my family hasn't been attacked?"

"You're arguing that you could very well be a Death Eater and that you can't be trusted?" Amelia asked in amusement. "Really Arthur."

"Just pointing things out," Arthur said with a blush, "can't take any chances after all."

"I promise we'll have you checked out then," Amelia said with a wave, "happy?"

"What do you need me for Amelia?"

"I need you to take charge of my evidence room," Amelia replied, "I'm shuffling things around to get as many Aurors out from behind desks as possible. This is all in addition to your old job of course."

"Of course," he agreed unhappily.

"Sorry Arthur but we're all spread a bit thin at the moment," she said contritely, "I'll see if I can get you a couple people. No promises."

"We all do what we must Amelia," Arthur sighed.

"Thank you Arthur." Amelia slide a pile of documents across her desk. "Could you please sign these."

"What are they?"

"Acceptance forms for your new position, information on your new pay scale, et cetera."

"This can't be right?" Arthur said in wonder. "I'm making more then a twenty year senior Auror."

"You're working as the head of one department and doing extra work for another," Amelia said frankly, "I'd give you more if I could authorize it with my signature."

"Thank you Amelia."

"Everyone's getting raises Arthur," she said quickly, "especially in Law Enforcement."

IIIIIIIIII

Jean-Paul arrived home and immediately went on guard as his finely honed danger senses informed him that there was something wrong. It was quiet, too quiet.

"Welcome back my love," his wife said happily, "how was your trip?"

"Where are the girls?" Jean-Paul demanded, resisting the urge to allow his paranoia to take control.

"Gabrielle has locked herself in her room and Fleur is laying siege," Amarante replied absently.

"I have had enough of this," he growled. Jean-Paul stormed up the stairs and grabbed his eldest daughter, a couple quick spells overcame the charms that Gabrielle had used to bolster her defenses and Jean-Paul walked in and grabbed her with his other hand. "I have had it. You two are sisters, you should be supporting each other not bickering like this." He took several deep breaths. "Now then, I am going to leave the room and you had better have this all worked out by the time I get back."

Jean-Paul Delacour returned with his wife and watched their two daughters argue for several minutes with a sense of annoyance on his part and a great sense of amusement on hers. The two girls locked gazes for a few moments before nodding and turning to their parents with identical looks of smug satisfaction on their faces.

"Oh god," he said in horror, "what is it you've cooked up?"

"Gabrielle and I have reached an agreement," Fleur said with a smile.

"You said that we should be supporting each other," Gabrielle added rebelliously.

"Oh?" Amarante asked eagerly. "What sort of arrangement."

"We will allow 'arrie to decide who he wishes to marry," Fleur said cheerfully, "and the loser will become 'arrie's mistress." This would have never happened if her competitive spirit hadn't been sparked, as it was it had and Fleur was not thinking clearly.

"As if he would choose an old cow when he could have a beautiful young girl like myself," Gabrielle interjected, causing Fleur to growl in annoyance and assuring that the fires of competition would not die any time soon.

"What?" Jean-Paul exclaimed. "You can't just . . ." He froze. "I have to go, I will leave this situation in your capable hands my love."

"Of course," Amarante agreed, "I will deal with everything." She waited until her husband had left before turning back to her daughters. "So tell me, how exactly will this situation work?" Growing up with a veela as a mother had taught Amarante a very different set of morals than was normally found in a woman in her social position, and well . . . to be honest, this situation was much too amusing to allow to die a natural death.

|||||||

Harry shook off the affects of the portkey and looked around. He shivered, the air here was significantly colder than it had been at his last stop. In the distance he could see a crescent shaped harbor filled with what he presumed were fishing boats.

"Where the hell am I now?" Harry muttered.

"Saint Pierre and Miquelon," a feminine voice replied.

"What?" Harry spun around.

"Saint Pierre and Miquelon," she repeated, "how did you get here without knowing where you were?"

"It's a long story," Harry sighed.

"Does it have something to do with using strange portkeys?" She asked suspiciously. "What kind of trouble are you in that you'd do something stupid like that?"

"I told the concierge to surprise me," Harry said with a shrug, "he did."

"Oh." She relaxed a hair. "So you're not in any trouble."

"I do have a group of people out to kill me," Harry admitted, "but other than that, no."

"What kind of people are trying to kill you?" She demanded.

"Death Eaters," Harry replied, "they're a group of purebloods in the UK that dress up in stupid costumes."



"I've heard of them," she said dryly. "Evangéline Arsenault," she introduced herself, "Chief of Magical Law Enforcement for the colony of Acadia."

"Wow," Harry said, more than a bit impressed by the title. "Harry Potter."

"It's not as impressive as it sounds," she said with a smile, "all that's left of the once grand colony is this tiny island."

"Oh. So where are we anyway?"

"Not far from Canada," she replied, "have you gone through customs?"

"Not here," Harry admitted.

"Let me see your passport then." She held out an expectant hand.

"Sure," Harry agreed, handing it over.

She flipped through it for a few moments before handing it back. "Never mind, you do not have to go through customs."

"I don't?"

"Not with that visa," she replied, "have you eaten?"

"No."

"Come on then," she said, "I'll buy you lunch."

"Thanks."

IIIIIIII

Amelia was learning what it was to be in hell. The Minister had an easy job, possibly the easiest job in the magical part of the United Kingdom. All he had to do was sign whatever was put in the signature bin and veto everything that had been put in the veto bin and the gold would pour in. All that of course depended on someone that cared more for gold than a smooth running government. When a competent

person took the reigns of power, well, let's just say that Amelia was more than a bit tempted to have herself arrested and imprisoned for the role she played in the coup.

"Hello again Amelia," Jean-Paul said as he walked into her office.

"Glad you're here," she said, "good to have a friendly face around anyway."

"Why's that?"

"ICW decided to send an observer," Amelia replied, "not sure who by my contacts say that he's a real bastard. Last thing we need is sanctions on top of the mess that Fudge left behind." She closed her eyes. "You wouldn't happen to know how your government is going to jump would you?"

"Full support," he said, "and the ICW rep is more than a bit annoyed at what went on under the Fudge administration."

"One worry lessened a bit," Amelia said gratefully, "you wouldn't happen to know who they're sending would you?"

"I would indeed."

"Who?"

"Me."

"You?"

"Yep."

"How long were you going to wait before sharing this little tidbit of information with me you son of a bitch?" She laughed.

"I was going to stretch it out a bit more but that seemed like a good place to tell you," he said with a grin, "how's your house cleaning going?"

"It's like wading through a pool of shit," Amelia said bluntly, "and it'll be weeks before I'm sure that we have a good picture of what happened."

"What percentage of employees have you vetted?"

"All of them," Amelia replied, "except one and since she missed it because she's in the hospital after being wounded saving my life . . . well, I think you'll understand that I'm willing to cut her a bit of slack on the issue."

"All of them?" He asked in astonishment.

"I made it my top priority when I realized just how deep they'd sunk their claws," Amelia sighed, "I'm down by thirty percent and another fifty is suspect. Bastards will go with the strong horse and keep their heads down."

"That's life," he said with a shrug, "how are the men I sent fitting in?"

"Vetted and useful," Amelia replied, "you couldn't round up a hundred more could you?"

"No," he said, "but you might try asking your commonwealth or the Americans."

"One headache at a time."

IIIIIIII

Severus Snape was not a happy man. First he'd been arrested, then he'd been subjected to all manor of indignities, and to top it all off he'd been locked away in this bloody boat.

"Good news Mr. Snape," one of the guards said as he flipped on the lights, "looks like you'll be leaving us sooner than we thought."

"So you're letting me go then?"

"No," he said, "the Canadians got back to us and told us that they don't have any record of you at all so you're not going there. Luckily,

the Canadian Battleship Athabaskan is going to Liberia and they've agreed to take you on the off chance that you might be from there."

"How is that good news?" Snape demanded.

"It's good news to us," he said cheerfully, "since we won't have to deal with you anymore. Ta ta."

"Damn you."

IIIIIIII

Jean-Paul returned from England; gathered his wife up into his arms and soundly kissed her. "Have you arranged things my love?" he asked.

"Of course," Amarante replied without looking up from her newspaper, "I've managed to make our daughters understand that 'arrie will have a much happier household if his wife and mistress get along with each other."

"What?" He asked dully. "That's not what I meant?"

"It isn't?" She asked with false surprise. "Silly me." She flipped a page. "Nothing to do now but sit back and watch the situation develop."

"Where are the girls?" He asked reluctantly.

"Gabrielle is in the Vineyard and I doubt that she will listen to you," he wife said with a bright smile, "she thinks that this is all a wonderful idea since it allows her to have 'arrie and to keep her sister close."

"What about Fleur?"

"Fleur is upstairs," Amarante said, "but she is in a stubborn mood so I doubt she will listen either. You could always try forbidding her," Amarante said hopefully, knowing that would only push their daughter further.

"Or I could try something that might work," he retorted.

"Like what?" She asked skeptically.

"I am going to have a calm conversation with her," he said, "our daughter is an intelligent girl after all."

"True." On the other hand, she was also stubborn and competitive. "Good luck my love."

"Thank you," he said with as much dignity as he could muster. He walked up the stairs and found their daughter reclining in the library with a book. "May I have a moment of your time Fleur?"

"Of course father," she said brightly. "But I warn you, I will not allow you to talk me out of my agreement with Gabrielle."

"You're not thinking this through my darling," Jean-Paul tried to use logic with his eldest daughter, "just calm down and . . ."

"I will not let Gabrielle beat me," Fleur hissed, her mood shifting in an instant, "not after she said that I was old and that my bossism were starting to sag to the floor."

"But Fleur . . ."

"No buts," Fleur said with an imperious sniff, "this conversation is over father." Fleur rose to her feet and stormed out of the room.

"That went well," Amarante said soothingly. She'd followed her husband up to watch the fun.

"It would have gone better if you hadn't encouraged her," Jean-Paul sighed.

"Me?" Amarante asked innocently, butter wouldn't melt in her mouth. "Would I encourage a situation like this for my own amusement?"

"Yes you would," he said sourly.

"True," she agreed, "but it is not as if the poor boy would mistreat either of them is it?"

"From what I've heard and observed, he's a fairly decent sort."

"And he is resistant to their allure is he not?"

"So I've been told," he agreed.

"And is it possible that he will attempt to run away after we tell him the situation?" Amarante asked. "Providing much opportunity for wacky hijinks?"

"It's possible," he agreed reluctantly.

"There you go then," she said with a satisfied smile, "you see? I am right once again."

|||||

They dragged Snape out of the brig and took him to the deck where two burly Canadian sailors were waiting next to what at first appeared to be a large canoe.

"Is that canoe going to take me to their ship?" Snape sneered.

"That is their ship," the guard said easily.

"Well . . . at least they can't lock me in the brig," Snape said optimistically.

"About that . . ."

Snape's eyes turned to the rope in the hands of the Canadian crew member's hands.

"I just want you to know that I loathe you all," Snape said sourly as they hogtied him and tossed him in the bottom of the canoe.

|||||

The Chief, some would say only, Acadian Law Enforcement officer watched Harry put away his meal like he hadn't eaten in weeks.

"Good?" She asked.

"Sorry," Harry said with a blush, "I don't normally eat this well during the summer."

"Don't worry about it," she advised, "just shows that you're a growing boy."

"Thanks."

"And don't worry about Death Eaters," she continued, "if you see one just tell me and I'll clap 'em in irons."

"Really?"

"Cross my heart."

"Oh . . . well, in that case there are three of them sitting in that booth over there. I was going to wait until after they did something but since you offered . . ."

"Really?" She asked in shock. "Three of them?"

"Yep," Harry agreed.

"I don't suppose you'd be willing to give me a hand with them would you?"

"If you like," Harry agreed. Faster than she could track it, Harry's wand appeared in his hand and shot three spells at the unsuspecting Death Eaters.

"How the hell did you do that?"

"Good reflexes," Harry replied. "Suppose the fact that it's normally them doing the ambushing and me reacting might have something to do with it too. Nice to be on the other side of it for once, really boosts my confidence to know that they should have had me in the ground a long time ago."

"Yeah," she said with an odd look on her face, "you ever think of becoming a Law Enforcement officer in Acadia? Good hours, decent pay, all the fish you can buy from the fishermen."

"Can't say I have," Harry said, "but I will."

“Good, cause I'm allowed to have two more deputies then I've got now and it'd be nice to have someone competent for a change.”

“How many do you have now?”

“Just the one,” she replied, “and Barney isn't the sort to be mentioned in the same sentence as the word 'competent.' Not unless it has an 'in' preceding it anyway.”

“I'll think about it,” he promised, “can't be worse then working for the Ministry and I'd bet it would be a whole lot better.”

“That's the spirit,” she cheered.

“It'll have to be after I take care of Voldemort though,” he said regretfully, “can't see it working out until don't have a Dark Lord trying to kill me.”

“Mentioning that you have a Dark Lord out to kill you isn't normally the sort of thing you mention in a job interview,” she advised, “so you know.”

“I'll remember that,” he laughed, “and on that note.”

“Yes.”

“You wouldn't happen to know where I could get a portkey would you? It's not that I don't like the place, it's just . . . well, when Death Eaters show up then you know it's not the best place to hang around.”

“I'll take care of it myself,” she offered, “and this time it'll be to a location you know.”

“Oh?”

“Don't think I didn't admire that knife you used to cut your meat,” she said with a grin, “be ready in two shakes.”

“Thanks . . . and could you make sure it's some place warmer then this.”



"It's the least I can do for my future deputy."

|||||

Tonks limped into the Minister's office and did her best to stand straight in front of the Minister's desk. "Auror Tonks reporting . . ."

"Sit down before you fall on your ass," Amelia barked, "what in the hell are you doing out of the hospital?"

"They . . ."

"Don't you even dare think about telling me that they released you," Amelia snapped.

"I couldn't stand it there boss," Tonks whined, "the food sucked and my parents were always hovering over me . . . and they made me pee in this pan on the bed, do you know how humiliating that is?"

"I've often thought that they did all that intentionally so that you were motivated to stay away," Amelia sighed, "what are you doing here then?"

"Where else am I going to go?" Tonks said simply. "I'd go insane staying home and I'd go insane even faster if I stayed with my parents."

"I suppose you can still do paperwork," Amelia agreed reluctantly, "don't get up."

"But my desk is . . ."

"Where ever I say it is," Amelia finished the sentence, "and I say that you're not leaving my sight until I'm satisfied that you're not going to harm yourself."

"Yes boss."

"Not to mention that even after the security checks, you're one of the few Aurors I can trust." Amelia rubbed her temple. "A bloody mess it is."

"Didn't realise it was that bad," Tonks said sympathetically, "they told me that Voldemort had been quiet lately."

"Loosing an arm really seems to have slowed him down," Amelia said proudly.

"So what are my duties here?"

"Whatever I decide they are," Amelia said with a smile. "At a minimum, you are going to be attending the close protection course, the advanced dueling course, the instructor course at the academy, and several dance lessons."

"Am I going to have time to do all that boss?"

"I told them to trim the fat and drop the posturing," Amelia said with a wave, "that makes them all significantly shorter."

"Even the dance course?"

"That's more to cram enough into your head so that you don't make a fool of yourself," Amelia said. And hopefully to mitigate some of that clumsiness, she added privately. "As for your duties . . ."

"Yes?"

"I'm thinking of having you teach a few classes at Hogwarts," she said.

"But boss . . ."

"Wait till I get to the good part," Amelia advised, "as a cover for your real job which will be guarding and tutoring that troublesome cousin of yours."

"I get to train Harry?" Tonks asked in delight.

"You get to train Harry," she confirmed.

"Thank you boss."

"Don't mention it," Amelia said with a dismissive wave. "For the time being, I want you to read through that stack of reports and pull out anything interesting or funny for me."

"Yes boss," Tonks agreed.

"If I need to leave for some reason then you are to stay here. If you need something then you are not to get it yourself. If you need to go to the loo then you are to call for assistance."

"Boss . . ."

"I have plans for you Auror Tonks," Amelia said firmly, "and I will not have you messing them up with your childness."

"Yes boss," she agreed.

|||||

Harry looked around and marveled at the stone buildings. It appeared as if the entire town had been unchanged for hundreds of years.

"Why don't you take a seat?" A pleasant voice asked. "Have some cheese, maybe a bit of wine, and we can get things settled."

"Thank you, Mister . . ."

"Inspector Charles LaRousse Dreyfus," the man replied.

"Harry Potter."

"May I ask why you decided to visit our fair town?"

"Sight seeing," Harry replied, "where are we anyway?"

"You do not know?"

"I asked for someplace warmer than Saint Pierre," Harry explained.

"And they sent you here 'eh," the man laughed, "we are in a small magical village in Aveyron France."

"Oh . . . then I guess I'm also going to visit friends while I'm here."

"Magical or mundane?"

"Magical."

"I could probably help you find them then," the Inspector said with a grin, "if you tell me their names."

"The Delacour family," Harry said, "I've been told that they have a house around here."

"What business do you have with them?" Dreyfus demanded, the civility dropped from his face.

"Like I said," Harry said in confusion, "I just wanted to say hi."

"Are they aware that you are coming to visit?"

"Should be," Harry agreed.

"What are their names from youngest to eldest?"

"I only know Fleur and Gabrielle," Harry admitted, "but I've met their father."

"When?"

"At the beginning of summer," Harry replied.

"How do you know Fleur and Gabrielle?" He barked. "Where did you meet them?"

"I met them at Hogwarts," Harry said quickly. "I know Fleur because I competed in the Triwizard tournament with her and I know Gabrielle because I pulled her out of the lake."

"Wait here," he ordered, "have some cheese, drink some wine. Do not make any sudden movements, draw your wand, or try to leave."

"Okay," the incredibly confused Harry agreed. He honestly didn't understand why the man had suddenly changed when the Delacour

family was mentioned, maybe it was because pureblood bigots were an even larger problem here than they were back home.

"My apologies sir," the Inspector said with a courteous smile as he walked back to the table, "I'm sure you will understand that two girls as lovely as the Delacour sisters are sometimes the victims of unwanted attention."

"And you were looking out for them," Harry said in understanding, "I understand. Thanks for keeping my friends safe."

"It is both an honor and a pleasure," he replied, "Madame Delacour is coming to get you. She insisted on escorting you back to the chateau herself and I am afraid that I could not turn down such a charming woman's request."

"I was going that way anyway, it'll be nice to have some company."

"An excellent attitude," he agreed, "are you enjoying the food?"

"It's wonderful," Harry gushed, "what kind of cheese is this? I've never had anything like it."

"That my young friend is Roquefort, by law it can only be made in this area."

"Wow."

IIIIIIII

Amarante walked into the sitting room and motioned for her daughters to take their seats. "I have some important news for the both of you."

"What is it mother?" Gabrielle asked.

"What have you been waiting for all summer?"

"You mean . . . 'arrie is coming."

"He is here," Amarante said happily, "our dear friend Inspector Charles is with him right now."

"I must change," Gabrielle shrieked, "and do my hair, and . . ."

"I am going to get him," Amarante said calmly, "you two get yourselves ready while I am gone."

"Yes mother," the two girls agreed.

She smiled as they dashed off to their rooms in a panic, ah to be young again.

IIIIIIIIII

Jean-Paul was in the Minister's office with Madame Bones when he suddenly froze and shivered for no apparent reason.

"What is it?" Amelia asked in concern.

"I'm fairly sure my condition isn't contagious," Tonks added.

"I just felt a chill," he replied, "like someone just walked across my grave."

"Why don't we call it a day then?" Amelia suggested. "It'll do us all a lot of good to knock off early anyway."

"Thank you," he said gratefully. He gathered up his things and departed.

"It's probably nothing," Tonks offered.

"Probably," Amelia agreed, "are you free tonight Auror Tonks?"

"No plans boss," Tonks replied, "you want me to work late?"

"No," Amelia said, "I was hoping that you could have dinner with us tonight. I promise that the backup won't be late and I'll have half a dozen Senior Aurors posted around the property to prevent a repeat of last time."

"I don't know . . ."

"Susan will be inconsolable if you don't show up," Amelia pressed, "she really looks up to you and is hoping to spend the night bothering you for personal information."

"Really not the best argument to use boss," Tonks laughed.

"Well?"

"Sure boss," she agreed, "why not."

|||||||

As they rode to the Delacour house, Jean-Paul's wife gave Harry a smile that immediately set his danger senses to maximum.

"I think I should warn you about something before we get to my home," Amarante said calmly.

"Warn me about what?"

"I'm not sure it's my place to tell you," she demured.

"Oh . . . alright then."

"But I think I must," she said, annoyed at his lack of reaction.

"If you must," Harry agreed, "what is it?"

"My daughters 'ave agreed that one will be your wife and the other your mistress," the gorgeous half veela replied with a sultry grin, "such a lucky boy you are no?"

"No," Harry agreed, "I gotta get out of here."

"But you 'ave already agreed to stay with us," the woman said with a pout. It would not do to allow the boy to escape and thus avert the fun. "Are you breaking that promise?"

"No." Harry slumped. "I'm not breaking my promise."

"Excellent," Amarante purred, "so good to know that you are a man of your word."

The second Harry walked through the front door he found himself under assault by not one but two girls. Gabrielle attached herself to his left side and began chattering in French too rapid to understand while Fleur moulded herself to his right while whispering sweet nothings into his ear.

"May I borrow him for a few moments girls?" Their mother asked. She smiled at Gabrielle's suspicious glare. "I promise you both that I have no designs on his body." She led him up the stairs and to one of the bedrooms. "This is where you'll be staying while you're here. Fleur is across the hall and Gabrielle is on your right."

"Oh . . . thank you."

"If I were you, I'd research some hefty locking and privacy charms before going to sleep tonight." She laughed in delight. "Or some silencing charms if you don't want to learn the other two I suppose." Oh the look on his face, he was as amusing as she hoped he would be. "Come along 'arrie, we had better get back down stairs before my daughters come to think that I'm having my wicked way with you."

"Uh . . ." To be quite frank, Harry wasn't sure how to respond to that statement.

IIIIIIIIII

Tonks did her best to ignore the looks of hero worship on the faces of Hanna and Susan. Bloody embarrassing it was, she thought to herself, now I know why Harry hates it so bloody much.

"Weren't . . . weren't you scared when you attacked Vol . . . Volde . . . Voldewho?" Susan asked breathlessly.

"Course not," Tonks snorted, "I knew your aunt had my back. All I had to do was distract him long enough for her to get her shot in." The looks of awe were redirected to Madame Bones.

"She's just being modest," Amelia said confidently, "I didn't expect to do anything but die until Tonks jumped in. If it weren't for her then I wouldn't be here right now and Voldemort would have two arms." The looks shot back to Tonks and locked on.



“Uh . . .” Tonks glared at her boss. “I’m sure . . . uh . . . damn.”

“Keep asking questions girls,” Amelia ordered, “Auror Tonks needs to learn to get over this shyness of hers and you girls may not get another opportunity to talk to such an accomplished Auror.” She grinned at the look of malice on her underling’s face, that’ll learn the lil bint to follow orders next time.

|||||

Gabrielle slipped out of her bed and crept down the hall to the room that had been assigned to Harry. Imagine her surprise to find her older sister on her knees picking the lock.

“What are you doing?” Gabrielle demanded. She had just caught her older sister skulking around the guest room that contained her future husband and she was not happy that Fleur had sought the first taste.

“I am simply giving 'arrie a chance to experience the difference between a woman and a child,” Fleur said with a superior look on her face, “now run along young child.”

“Raaaa,” Gabrielle screamed as she flung herself at Fleur.

“Merde alors,” their mother grumbled as she hit the two girls with hexes to end the fight, “you girls can just stay on the floor until you learn to get along.” She stormed back into her chambers and flung herself on to the bed next to her husband. “Honestly.”

“I guess it’s true,” he said glumly.

“What is?”

“That daughters are god’s curse on a man for being a man,” Jean-Paul replied. He closed his eyes, there had to be a way to settle things down to their normal levels. A slow smile formed on Jean-Paul’s face as a plan began to form. It wouldn’t be hard at all to keep the boy away from his two attractive daughters, he just had to explain things the right way and the boy would do all the work for him. “Jean-Paul,” he muttered to himself, “you’re a genius.”

"Hmmm?"

"Nothing dear."

|||||

Voldemort groaned in pain as the healer took another two inches off his arm. "When is this going to be done with?" The Dark Lord demanded. "Answer me you simpering fool."

"Forgive me master," he sobbed, "the rot is too fast. Every time I think I've cut it all out, I find a new place it's infected. I . . . I can't cut much more, if it goes much further."

"Fool," Voldemort laughed, "I AM IMMORTAL." He was still laughing two hours later when the healer removed his shoulder and he didn't stop until the rot reached his heart.

|||||

Jean-Paul waved for Harry to join him after breakfast that day and the curious 'boy-who-lived' followed his savior out of the room and into the man's study.

"Harry," Jean-Paul said with a grave look on his face, "there's something I need to tell you."

"Yeah."

"I wouldn't share this information with just anyone you understand," he began, "it's just that I like you and I feel a certain responsibility for your welfare."

"And." Harry was starting to get nervous.

"Well . . . I just." He sighed. "I just don't think you realize what you're getting into here." He looked around nervously. "Has anyone ever told you about Veela mating rituals?"

"No."

"Well . . ." Jean-Paul felt a bit guilty for what he was about to do, sure he liked the kid but he wasn't sure he wanted Harry to impregnate both his daughters before the summer was out. Maybe he'd go back in a few months and tell the boy that it was all a joke, it wasn't his fault things had turned out this way. He'd been sure that Fleur would be distant, friendly but aloof. While Gabrielle wouldn't be able to muster the courage to string more than two words together in Harry's presence. "You've got to promise that what I tell you never leaves this room and I'll give you the warning that no one ever gave me."

IIIIIIII

Amarante walked into the room where her two daughters were plotting Harry Potter's downfall causing them both to look up guiltily. "Don't mind me," she said, "I just thought you'd want to know something."

"What is it mother?" Fleur asked.

"Your father has filled 'arrie's head with some nonsense about Veela eating a . . . personal part of the body after copulation," she replied, "said that it was why he only had two daughters."

"Harry didn't fall for it did he?" Gabrielle asked sickly.

"Your father is quite good at manufacturing evidence," Amarante pointed out, "it has been his profession for several decades you know."

"So 'arrie thinks that we will harm him and is escaping into the night." Gabrielle moaned, her voice hardened. "Release the hounds."

"Mother," Fleur called out.

"Yes darling."

"Will the hounds find 'arrie or will they find him and kill him?"

"Chain up the hounds," Gabrielle's voice called out loudly. "Damn."

"Language," her mother scolded.

|||||

Harry and Jean-Paul ran through the extensive vineyards that surrounded the Delacour estates.

"Wait up 'arrie," Gabrielle's voice called out. The two men looked back to see their pursuers gaining ground. "I must explain."

"We're not going to make it," Harry moaned.

"Run boy," Jean-Paul shouted, "It's too late for me, I'll hold 'em off." Harry didn't need to be told twice and was gone in a flash.

"Father," Gabrielle asked tearfully, "how could you."

"Honey I . . ." He stowed his wand, reached out to hug her, and was hit by Fleur's stunner and everything went black.

Several hours later, Jean-Paul awoke to find himself strapped to a table in the dungeon. "Girls," he called out, "I can explain." A loud 'wooshing' sound from above caused him to look up and his eyes bulged in shock as he saw a large bladed pendulum swinging back and fourth over his midsection.

"Uh . . . girls," he called out, "can we talk about this?"

"Where is 'arrie?" Gabrielle demanded.

"I don't know," he replied.

"Wrong answer," Gabrielle growled, "lower it."

"Would it help to tell you that I'm sorry?" He asked as the blade dropped another foot.

"No."

AN: Added the last few scenes were all for the pendulum, couldn't resist tossing that in and it may or may not stay if I decide to continue this. Doubt they would have gotten written if I hadn't been up for thirty some hours by the time it got written. Tommy King, dogbertcarroll, bit of editing by Belas, title by canoncansodoff

Omake by fenriswolf001

"You're being transferred to more secure quarters; word has reached us that Voldemort is going use distraction of the full moon to try and break you out. By the way, meet your special guard for the night, he'll be staying in your cell with you to keep you safe. Cornelius, say hello to Remus Lupin, former Professor of Hogwarts, and fiance of Nymphadora Tonks..."

Omake by SP

"What?" Harry asked dumbly.

"My daughters 'ave agreed that one will be your wife and the other your mistress," the gorgeous half veela replied with a sultry grin, "such a lucky boy you are no?"

"No," Harry agreed, "I gotta get out of here."

"But you 'ave already agreed to stay with us," the woman said with a pout. It would not do to allow the boy to escape and thus avert the fun. "Are you breaking that promise?"

"N-No, but..." Harry begged, "But I can't... satisfy... two veela!"

"Zat's all right. We 'ave Viagra, and I shall 'ave a copy of ze French Kama Sutra sent to your room, vite."

Omake by neil.reynolds

A Conversation Between Tonks and A. Bones:

"Boss, what I can't understand is why the French government didn't send you a description of the other two aurors that went to France with me. I mean, you know why I can't remember their appearance, but I couldn't imagine the tailor not being able to give the French aurors a description."

With an odd smile, Amelia asked, "Who said they didn't include a description?"

"Then why did you call just me in, and behave like that?"

"Simple. You were the only one explicitly identified. You are also still a trainee. There for I had to decide how I'd deal with you before I could deal with your partner. Because your name was given, I had the excuse to call you in first and find out more about the situation."

"Why would you even need the excuse?"

"Because I haven't officially resolved the situation yet. The French told me that one of the men had a pegleg and a false eye, and flashed an auror's badge. Luckily we don't have anyone like that on the force, so I have to conclude he was just pretending to be an auror. Now if he had done it in Britain, it would have been impersonating an auror, and I'd have to issue a warrant with that description; but since it wasn't in a country where the badge was valid, it wasn't a crime."

Tonks asked, "And what about ..." She paused looking for a safe term, "the other auror?"

"He didn't flash a badge, and his only identification as an auror was your testimony, and you had already mislead them once into thinking the pegleg man was an auror, so I don't need to grill all of the bald black aurors in my command. It could be just a coincidence that your partner is the only one to match that description. He did threaten violence against the tailor, so whoever he is had better not go to France."

"But don't we have some sort of reciprocal arrangement with France allowing us limited powers over there?"

"Only when in hot pursuit of a criminal. The chase has to be both time critical, and following a serious criminal. Harry Potter was not wanted by the police, and the chase occurred long enough afterwards that he could have had a full wardrobe made up. As aurors, you were allowed to follow his portkey without going through customs, as part of an investigation; but once the tailor refused to speak, you were required to leave or speak to either someone from customs, an embassy or a French auror. Making a detour to buy your father a present is the kind of thing both countries agree to ignore."

Omake by nielingage

Department of Licensing:

"Welcome. Please take a number and wait to be served.:

Lucius Malfoy, Bellatrix Lestrange, and Walden Macnair all grabbed their numbers and found seating.

"There has to be an easier way to do this," muttered Macnair.

"True," growled Bellatrix. "We waste four or five hours here every time we have to come in."

"Stop whining," Lucius ordered. "If we don't keep our Murder Licenses current we'll be picked up in a heartbeat by the Aurors. If we didn't have our licenses we'd be in Azkaban before you could so much as bleat."

He glanced at his ticket: #363. Then his gaze rose to the "Now Serving" board, which read #7.

"Make a note, Bella," he said. "I want to know the names of the people running the counters. They might be deserving of an invitation to the next Dark Revel."

Omake for Tickler by Sha

"Have you anything to report on this French Tickler person, Alastor?" the Order meeting steadfastly ignored the sniggering coming from a certain metamorphmagus.

"Actually, I've got a question to put to McGonagall about that," Moody growled.

"Yes, Moody?" Minerva asked, her stern expression tightening slightly as she realized that Tonks had stopped giggling and was now leaning forward on the table, intently paying attention to their conversation. If that wasn't the mark of trouble, Minerva had never had to organize detention for a certain set of Marauders.

"Well, one of the witnesses I questioned, really, the only one that was actually sober, mentioned that this French Tickler person had really put a feather in her cap. Now I know that a lot of witches wear feathers, Minerva, you included, but I never questioned why until...now...is there something you'd like to say Auror Tonks?" he demanded of the momentarily silent, and now hysterically laughing shapeshifter.

"No, no. (giggle) I just always wondered (snort) about why some witches (hiccup) wear feathers! (full blown laugh) Now I know!"

Snape Omake: by moshehim

"Arrest him for soliciting."

"Soliciting? I'm not a solicitor, I'm a potion Master!" bellowed Snape.

"A potion master?" asked the inspector. "What's that?"

"I brew potions, mix ingredients like..." Snape thought about ingredients muggles would know. "... armadillo bile and lacewing larvae and wormwood and-"

"Yes?" asked the woman? man? something. "And what does that do?"

"Well, those particular ingredients go into contraceptive potions, but I just brought them up as an example-"

"Yes?" she/he/it said again, cutting him off. "Contraceptives, I see. Do you sell those to people?"

"Sell? Do I look like a bloody shop clerk to you?" Snape was angry now. "I'm a teacher. I teach at a school!"

"You teach children how to mix contraceptive 'potions' from armadillo bile?" asked the inspector dubiously.

"No, I write it down on the board, then I go around and breathe at the children's necks, and watch as they blow up each other so-"



"That's all I need to know," said the inspector. "Take him away, men."

Omake by xzood

3 weeks before:

Deep in the dungeons of Hogwarts, a infamous potion master plotted how to destroy the Potter line. Finally, in a very old book, he found the solution:

Igors Igonovics Ingenious Infertility Infusion: This potion has no immediate visible effect. When the skin of the victim touches this potion, it will be absorbed immediately. It will cause the victim to be drained of all energy an fall asleep, as soon as he attempts to have sex. The effect is permanent and once applied the potion is undetectable.

It was a potion very similar to a sleeping potion in the Hogwarts curriculum. It shouldn't be too difficult to manipulate the potion. It was perfect. "This will be the end of the Potter line. In addition, he will become most unpopular with the ladies. Bwahahahahaaaaaaa."

insert 4 hours of evil laughter here

During the potions lesson, he was exited. He watched the boy preparing the final steps. In his excitement he missed, that the boy steered three times counter clock wise instead of clockwise. A simple tripping hex made the boys head land into the potion. Perfect. Soon, very soon, the Potter line will end. "Potter, you incompetent fool. Get yourself out of my classroom. 50 Points from Gryffindor"

Now in Delacour manor:

Two girls snuck into Harrys room, trying to show him, who's the best. Luckily each of the girls applied a series of silencing charms on the room.

insert some smut here

Twelve hours later, a much energized Harry Potter left his room. "Finally they are asleep. I need some food and then do some sport."

Mrs. Delacur watched Harry in curiously. "Good morning Harry. I wonder why Fleur and Gabrielle aren't downstairs yet. I thought they wouldn't want you to eat alone."

Later that day Mrs. Delacur was telling her friend Lasmiranda, a full blooded Veela the story of a boy, which had worn out two quarter Veela. Neither of them did see one of Lasmirandas girls in the room. A few hours later, four full blooded vela girls started their search for Harry Potter. It didn't take long to find their pray.

insert some smut here

insert more smut here

Four days later, very happy, but very hungry and now very very much energized Harry Potter left the room. "Finally, they have all fallen asleep. Food!!"

When the four girls finally woke up, word spread among the Veela about a boy named Harry Potter. A sex god that wore out four full blooded Veela. Soon after that, nearly every Veela was looking for Harry Potter, wanting to test Harrys limits. And find him, they did.

insert some smut here

insert more smut here

insert additional smut here

A few months later, a certain Dark Lord entered the room. The smell of sex was noticealble from some streets away. On his way he passed several passed out Veela. When Harry spotted him, one swish of Harrys wand and the Dark Lord was no more. Vanquishing a Dark Lord consumed some of the energy, which continuous sex for ninety one days with countless Veela brought him. At least the Dark Lord was good for something.

And he lived happily ever after.

Disclaimer: Not another evil Dumbledore fic.

## Secrets

Harry was sitting alone in the Gryffindor Common room just enjoying the sensation of being alone. Privacy was a rare privilege for Harry, living as he did in both the magical and muggle worlds. At school he shared his living space with several other boys and during the summer he was subject to all manner of distractions at all manner of times, the locks were on the outside of the door after all.

Shattering the silence and ending his solitude, the portrait opened to admit a very distraught looking Hermione who made a bee line towards Harry.

"What is it?" Harry asked, the haunted look on his friend's face made him sick with fear.

"I didn't mean to," Hermione said in a small voice, "I just wanted to see it. I'd read about Pensives and all I wanted to do was look at it."

"Calm down," he said to his friend, "is this important."

"I . . . I think it's very important," Hermione said softly. She looked very close to tears as she mustered up the will to tell him the rest. "It's about your parents."

Harry looked around the Common Room. It looked empty but there were too many shadows, too many places to hide.

"Come on," he said. He took her by the hand and took her towards the exit. "We need to find some place more quiet."

The two students went through the castle and into the darker, unused sections until they'd found a classroom that hadn't been used in centuries if the thick layer of dust on the floor was any indication.

"So what's this all about Hermione," Harry asked calmly.

"I was in Professor Dumbledore's office to talk about my classes," Hermione began, "I had the top scores for our year and he wanted to tell me about it personally."

"Go on," Harry prompted gently. Headmaster or not, Dumbledore would pay if he'd harmed Harry's friend.

"He told me and I was very excited. The Headmaster laughed and told me that I could stay in his office until I'd managed to collect myself," Hermione continued, "I think . . . I think he made a joke about having to kick me out if I was still there when it was time for lights out."

"What happened next?"

"I was just about to leave when I saw it." Hermione's shoulders dropped. "I'd read about them of course but I'd never seen one, I didn't think it would hurt just to look at it. I . . . I didn't mean to . . ."

"Didn't mean to what?"

"I looked into the Headmaster's Pensieve," Hermione confessed, "the things in there . . . Harry, about your parents it was so horrible . . ."

"What about them?" Harry demanded. "Hermione you have to tell me."

"I know why Voldemort was after them," Hermione said, "I know . . . I know who told . . . I . . . Harry."

"It's okay Hermione." Harry had to take several deep calming breaths to avoid screaming at the girl until she spilled everything. "Just tell me, it'll all be okay."

"There was a prophecy made about you," Hermione said, "it says that you have to kill Voldemort . . . that you're the only one who can."

"That's why he wanted to kill me," Harry said dully.

"And Snape's the one who told him," Hermione said in disgust, "it was all there in Dumbledore's memories."

"His . . . memories?"

"A pensieve is a device for storing and replaying memories," Hermione lectured, "Dumbledore was keeping several memories stored in his and I saw everything. What are we gonna do Harry?"

"I...I... Surely he must have had a reason," Harry exclaimed, not quite willing to let go of the trust he had in the man who was responsible for getting him away from the Dursleys for most of the year.

Hermione fists clenched, in anger. Having learned young that some people would just pretend to be friends, only to betray you later, had made its mark on her personality and now finding out that there were people in authority, adults even, who were the same way... Mad Eye Moody would have approved of her newly formed mindset.

"There are always reasons Harry, but they're not always good ones. He's placed a known murderer and Death Eater in control of Slytherin, the one place where recruiting for dark wizards would be easy and we've seen how Snape encourages them along that path without Dumbledore interfering in anyway. Flamel's stone was guarded so lightly that WE managed to break in and get to it while Dumbledore was mysteriously called away. Dumbledore's every move seems to be designed to help Voldemort. Who placed you with the Dursleys? Why haven't they gotten a stipend for raising you? Hagrid placed you there because Dumbledore asked him to and the money they should have gotten to raise you obviously never arrived, so they took it out on you. I think we're going to have to face facts, Harry. Dumbledore is as dark as Voldemort, he's just more subtle about it."

"What do we do?" Harry whispered. "Do we tell Ron?"

"Ron's family is too close to Dumbledore," Hermione said savagely. "Even assuming he really is our friend, we can't say too much in case he lets something slip at home. As for the rest . . . what do you want to do Harry?"

"I wanna avenge my parents," Harry said, "but not if it means that the Potter family doesn't survive. Mum wanted me to live."

"Then we have to escape," Hermione said firmly, "these things take time so the important thing is to pretend that everything is normal."

"How long?" Harry asked.

"Maybe we can get away next year," Hermione said hopefully.

"Where would we go?" Harry asked.

"I don't know," Hermione said. "I guess I'll have to do some research," she added with a weak smile. The two children sat in silence for a few minutes as they muddled over their situation.

"Hermione," Harry said suddenly, "I thought of something."

"What is it?"

"Why would Dumbledore help us save Sirius?" Harry asked in confusion. "Does that mean Sirius is in on it?"

"He might be," Hermione said slowly, "but it's more likely that Dumbledore just wanted to keep his nice guy image going. I think Dumbledore probably knew that Sirius was innocent the whole time. Think about it, who would you have lived with if Sirius hadn't gone to prison?"

"With Sirius," Harry agreed, "you're right. Wormtail has been living at Hogwarts most of the year since Percy's first came to Hogwarts. Dumbledore would have never overlooked that, he knows everything that happens at Hogwarts."

"I'll bet that was why Fudge was allowed to bring Dementors to guard the school," Hermione agreed, "and that's why they stayed after they attacked a student. After all, it was a student that Dumbledore wanted dead anyway."

"If anything happened to me then he could have blamed Sirius or the Ministry," Harry said with wide eyes, "

The two friends fell into silence as the portrait opened to admit several of their chattering housemates. They weren't able to find

enough privacy to feel comfortable continuing their conversation for several days.

"Let's talk about Ron," Hermione said seriously.

"Ok," Harry agreed, "what do you want to talk about?"

"We need to figure out if he's working for Dumbledore or if he's just an unwitting dupe," Hermione replied, "if he's a dupe then maybe we can take him with us."

"And if he's working for Dumbledore then we can use him to pass bad information to Dumbledore," Harry agreed.

"How did you meet any of the Weasleys?"

"It was when I was looking for platform nine and three quarters," Harry began, "I couldn't find it then Mrs. Weasley walked by looking for it too and . . ."

"Wait a minute," Hermione said with a frown, "what do you mean looking for it too?"

"She said something along the lines of what platform was it, nine and three quarters."

"Mrs. Weasley went to Hogwarts for seven years, then all the years for her older children. Why would she forget where the platform was on Ron's first year?" Not one of the numerous benign reasons occurred to the young girl.

"Maybe they changed it," Harry said charitably.

"It hasn't been changed since the mid eighteen hundreds," Hermione said with a wave, "why didn't you know how to get to the platform? Didn't Hagrid tell you?"

"He must have forgotten," Harry said.

"I can believe that Hagrid forgot to tell you," Hermione agreed, "but I can't agree that Mrs. Weasley did. Not after all the times she went anyway."

"So she was there on Dumbledore's orders," Harry said in dawning realization.

"All that proves is that Mrs. Weasley is in Dumbledore's back pocket," Hermione sighed, "it doesn't tell us anything about Ron."

"Well . . . I got on the train and sat there for a while until Ron arrived, he told me that all the other compartments were full and . . ."

"Wait," Hermione nearly shouted, "he said what?"

"That the other compartments were full," Harry repeated.

"But they weren't," Hermione said quickly, "I must have gone into a dozen compartments when I was looking for Neville's toad and there was plenty of room." She began hyperventilating and the idea that Ron may have simply wanted to sit next to the 'boy-who-lived' never entered her mind. "Ron must have been there on Dumbledore's orders too."

"What about the Troll," Harry asked, unwilling to think the worst of his friend.

"Which one of you decided to rescue me? It wasn't Ron was it?"

"No."

"And I don't remember him jumping in until after he was in danger," Hermione said savagely, "I don't think this was an attempt at you though."

"Then it was just a distraction while Voldemort went after the stone?"

"Maybe that too," Hermione agreed, "but do you really think that Dumbledore didn't know the second the Troll came through the wards? What did he do after Quirrell gave the warning?"



"He had the Prefects take students back to their rooms . . . but . . . wait."

"Exactly," Hermione said quickly, "everyone was safe in the Great Hall and there were a limited number of entrances to cover. The smart thing would have been to stay and take a head count but if they had done that . . ."

"Then you would have been missed right away," Harry said with a look of horror on his face, "Dumbledore wasn't trying to kill me with the troll."

"He was after me," Hermione whispered, "why?"

"You are the smartest student in our year," Harry said slowly, "maybe the smartest in Hogwarts."

"So?"

"You're also a muggle born," Harry said, "maybe he didn't want someone that he couldn't control influencing me . . . or . . . or maybe he just doesn't like 'mudbloods' like Voldemort."

"Maybe," Hermione agreed with a shaky frown.

"It doesn't matter," Harry said quickly. He'd forgotten what it was like to suddenly find that there were people in the world that wanted you dead. "All that matters is that he won't succeed."

"We can't beat him Harry," Hermione said in a small voice, "he's the greatest wizard of our age."

"But he won't live forever," Harry said, "all we have to do is hide until it's safe again."

"Just another year," Hermione sighed, "what do you think it'll be like?"

"Better then it is now."

IIIIIIII

Ron was feeling down. His two best friends hadn't been spending much time around him lately, always disappearing together to do god knows what.

"How are you doing tonight Mister Weasley?" Dumbledore asked kindly. "And what are you doing outside your dorms at this time of night."

"Professor Dumbledore," Ron gasped. "Sorry, I just needed to have some time alone."

"Worried about the way your friends have seemed to be distant lately?"

"Yeah," Ron agreed.

"I wouldn't worry about it," Dumbledore said with his best grandfatherly smile, "it's normal for boys and girls your age to pair off and forget everything that used to seem important."

"But they're just . . ."

"Your friends have just." The Headmaster paused. "Decided to explore some new feelings with each other. It's not that they don't wish to be your friend anymore, they're just wrapped up in the novelty of trying something new." Dumbledore was thrilled that Harry was getting a chance to participate in a normal part of teenaged life and glad that it was with his friend rather than a giggling fan that would take advantage of him.

"What should I do?"

"I'd recommend that you give them your support," Dumbledore said warmly, "and try not to worry so much when they disappear off together."

"Thanks Professor," Ron said in relief.

"Not at all," Dumbledore said, "do you need more time alone or would you rather get back to your dorm."

"Would . . . would it be alright if I stayed here for a little while longer?" Ron asked hesitantly.

"For as long as you need to," Dumbledore agreed. He pulled out a bit of parchment and jotted down a quick note. "If anyone else stopps you, show them this."

"Thank you Professor."

"Not at all. Just remember that my door is always open if you have any more issues."

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Harry and Hermione were crouched over the Marauder's Map with identical looks of sorrow on their faces. They'd wondered where Ron had been going at night, they'd suspected that he and his family had been working for Dumbledore, but to have proof.

"Guess this is it then," Harry said. He felt hollow. "We can't trust any of them."

"It's just you and me," Hermione agreed, "one more year."

"One more year," Harry said dully, "and we're out of here."

AN: Dumbledore as close to Canon as I can write him. Yes things are taken out of context, that's the whole point of the story. Dumbledore is doing his (shoddy in my opinion) best and Hermione gets enough information to become convinced that he's the darkest of dark wizards, doesn't mean she's correct. Scenes and polish by dogbertcarroll

Omake: Deleted Scene

"I don't know," Harry admitted. He collapsed as his legs could no longer hold his weight. "Snape is responsible for what happened to my parents and Dumbledore knew?"

"Dumbledore didn't just know," Hermione said in outrage, "he's been protecting him. Snape would have gone to Azkaban if it weren't for

Dumbledore. How could the Headmaster do something like that?" Hermione asked in confusion. "He's supposed to be a great light wizard. I . . . whatever you want to do, I'll support you Harry. From now until the end of time."

Omake: How this would go

"Ms. Granger, of all people I never expected that . . ." McGonagall trailed off.

"I know," Hermione said forlornly. She refused to take her eyes off her shoes. "I don't understand why I reacted that way to Fleur. I just got so mad . . . but that doesn't matter does it?"

"It certainly begins to explain things," Dumbledore spoke up for the first time, "girls your age often times have extreme reactions to Veela and in light of that I don't see the need to impose any punishments . . . Minerva?"

"Well." Minerva sighed. She really didn't want to have to do anything to her favorite student.

"I should at least have to apologize," Hermione said firmly. Everything was playing out the way she thought it would. "And shouldn't Madame Maxime decide if I should be reprimanded? It was her student I er assaulted."

"I think that's a wonderful idea," Minerva said warmly, "I'm glad to see you taking responsibility for your actions."

"Thank you Professor," Hermione said sweetly, "would you please escort me down to the Beauxbatons carriage and formally introduce me?"

"I would be delighted to do so," Minerva agreed, "would you like me to stay with you?"

"I really think that it would be best if I took care of things myself Professor," Hermione said honestly, "this is my problem and I must take care of it myself."

|||||||

"Well?" Olympe demanded harshly. "Minerva tells me you 'ave something to tell me?"

"I am here on behalf of Harry Potter," Hermione said firmly, "he would like to transfer to your school and I would like to accompany him."

"What?" Olympe asked in shock.

"My fight with Fleur was a ruse," Hermione explained, "I needed an opportunity to get an audience with you alone. I read that females undergoing puberty will occasionally have strong and negative reactions to Veela allure and I used that as an excuse to assault Fleur . . . I will of course offer a full apology and explanation to Fleur after we are safely in France."

"Why didn't young 'arrie come to me 'imself?" The Headmistress asked mildly. Her heart beat faster at the prospect of Harry Potter himself coming to her school and the prestige that he would bring with him.

"Do you honestly think that Dumbledore would allow Harry to slip out of his fingers?" Hermione asked. "Or his top student?"

"I 'ad 'eard that 'arrie's studies were in the 'igh average?"

"I was talking about myself," Hermione said with a tight smile, "my scores are the highest that Hogwarts has seen in decades. Where Harry goes, I go."

"How are you planning to deal with the language issue?"

"I speak fluent French," Hermione replied, "my mother insisted I learn . . . I would assume that it is overly formal and archaic, which is why after the harsh punishments you assign me for my actions against Fleur that you will allow me to practice my language and I will drag Harry along against his will."

"You are acting with 'arre's full knowledge and support?"

"Yes," Hermione said simply.

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"Grab the trophy," Harry screamed, "run Ced." Harry waited a split second after the other boy left before activating his own emergency Portkey.

To Harry's immense satisfaction, the other boy grabbed the trophy and disappeared.

"Harry's still there," Cedric screamed, "we have to go back for him."

"No," Hermione cried. Sobbing, the girl ran from the crowd. Her tears stopped after she was out of sight and after confirming that she was alone, she activated her own Portkey and disappeared to begin her new life.

AN: And they changed their names and moved to another country. Maxime is too close to Dumbledore to be trusted, they were laying a false trail.

Disclaimer: What if Moody was myopic.

## Hermione Granger and the Goblet of Fire

Hermione dashed through the halls praying that she'd be able to get to class on time when she turned the corner and ran into something large and solid.

"Oof," the object groaned.

"Ouch," Hermione winced. She was sure that she felt something pop when she landed. She looked around and to her horror discovered that she'd run into her Defence Professor. "Sorry Professor Moody," she said nervously.

"No harm done girl," he said gruffly, "we both should have been a bit more vigilant. Let's leave it at that 'eh."

"Alright," she agreed.

"Be a good lass and help me find my eye would yeh?"

"Yes Professor," Hermione agreed. The two of them scoured the ground until they found it. "Here it is Professor."

"Give it here," he said calmly, "cracked."

"I'm . . ."

"Don't you dare try to apologize again," Moody grumbled, "we already settled this and we agreed that there was a lack of vigilance on both our parts."

"Yes Professor," she agreed. Hermione pushed herself up to her feet and couldn't suppress wincing in pain.

"You hurt yerself?" Moody demanded. "Why dinna ya tell me sooner lass?"

"Sorry . . ."

"None of that," Moody sighed, "my fault there. Should have checked you over first. Remember that for when you're a Professor or a Senior Auror."

"I will Professor."

"Come on then." He hit her with a couple quick healing charms to deaden the pain and led her to the Hospital Wing. "You here Poppy?"

"What is it?" The Healer asked. "Ms. Granger, did Harry hurt himself again?"

"No Madame Pomfrey," Hermione said with a blush, "it's me this time."

"Have a seat," Poppy ordered. She gently put Hermione onto one of the beds and cast several diagnostic charms. "Ribs, wrist, and ankle are broken."

"That's my fault," Moody admitted, "allowed myself to get complacent and she ran into me."

"Are you injured too?" The Healer raised her wand to cast a diagnostic charm on the old warrior.

"Never you mind that," Moody said quickly. The grizzled man started backing out of the room. "I can take care of myself."

"Could you have Harry or Ron bring me my homework?" Hermione called after the man. She turned to the healer. "Do you think he heard me?"

"I'm sure you'll get your homework Ms. Granger," the school nurse assured the girl, "I'll see to it myself if I have to."

"Thank you Madame Pomfrey."

IIIIIIII

Harry and Ron wandered into the hospital wing a few hours later with arm fulls of books and homework for their bushy haired friend.



“Professor McGonagall included some extra credit assignments for you,” Harry explained why the pile was so large, “and Madame Pince had us bring you some books to pass the time.”

“Be sure to thank them for me,” Hermione said gratefully.

“Professor McGonagall also wanted you to have this,” Ron said as he held up a quill, “she said that it'll let you do your homework with a broken wrist.”

“Is that a dictation quill?” Hermione asked intently.

“I guess so,” Ron agreed with a shrug, “she wanted us to make sure you knew that you still had to write your name in by hand.”

“Of course I do,” Hermione said quickly, “other wise the paper won't have my magical signature.”

“Uh . . . right.”

“This is wonderful,” Hermione cheered.

“How long are you going to have to be in here?” Harry asked, knowing from personal experience how unpleasant a stay in the Hospital wing could be.

“Madame Pomfrey wants to keep me for two more days,” Hermione said glumly, “just to be sure.”

“All that for a few broken bones?” Harry asked with a frown.

“Madame Pomfrey is afraid that I might have some nerve damage in my wrist,” Hermione explained, “so she's healing it slower then normal so that she can monitor things more closely.”

“Oh . . .”

After a bit more conversation and to Ron's disgust. “What's the point of spending time in the Hospital Wing if you're going to turn in your work on time?” Harry agreed to pick up Hermione's homework the next morning before classes.

|||||

Hermione was just putting the finishing touches on her assignments when Harry came in to pick them all up.

"Just a bit longer," Hermione said.

"You're not done yet?" Harry asked incredulously, sure now that Hermione was injured a lot worse than she'd admitted.

"Just need to sign my Defense homework," Hermione replied, "and . . . done." She looked down at her name with a frown.

"I'll see you at lunch." Harry gathered up the girl's assignments. "Might even bring you one of those pastries you like so much if you're a good witch."

Hermione just stuck her tongue out in response.

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Moody scowled down at the blurred letters. Who knew that the old bastard relied on his false eye so much? Come to think about it, why didn't he just get a pair of spectacles? Either too vain or was afraid that it would be seen as a weakness, Crouch figured. He squinted at the assignments again, he could just barely make out an 'H' and it was on top, must be the Potter boy's since he was the last one out of the room.

Crouch carefully ripped the name off the parchment. All he needed to do now was confound the cup and drop in the name to start the plan which would eventually bring about the return of his Lord and Master.

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"Wait, there's another name coming out of the cup." Every eye in the Great Hall focused on Harry Potter, who else could it be?

"Who is it?" Someone asked to move things along, as if there was any doubt.

"Hermione Granger."

"What . . . me?"

AN: Don't believe I've seen this one.

Disclaimer: Unimaginative Pranks go in unimaginative fics. The twins and the Marauders are supposed to be comic gods, this is a poor attempt at making them so.

Better then the Average Prank

"Got a minute Professor?" Harry asked as he walked into the Deputy Headmistress's office.

"What can I do for you Mr. Potter?" She asked with a fond smile.

"Well . . . Hermione tells me that I need to get a permission slip from you," Harry explained. "Well, actually I need it to be signed by my my Head of House or two other Professors and the Deputy Headmistress or the Headmaster. Since you qualify for both then I only need your signature, said so in 'Hogwarts a History' or something."

"Alright Mr. Potter," Minerva agreed. She pulled out a piece of parchment and dipped her quill in a bottle of ink. "What do you need permission for?"

"Sex," Harry said with a straight face, "what with Voldemort and all the other things in my life I really need a way to relax and sex seemed like the easiest."

"With . . . Ms. Granger?"

"It's not like I know any other girls good enough to do something like that with them," Harry said quickly, "well . . . maybe Ginny but her brothers would kill me . . . not to mention the fact that she bears a passing resemblance to my dead mum and that's just creepy."

"But they look nothing alike," Minerva protested faintly.

"All I remember about my mum is red hair and a nice voice," Harry said firmly. "Oh and her screaming before Voldemort killed her. You see the predicament I'm in, no nailing redheads for this boy with a mutilated forehead and especially not Ginny."

"Yes . . . well . . . I'll need to think about this Mr. Potter."

"No problem," Harry said cheerfully, "could you give your response to Hermione when we have lunch? I want to get things started as soon as possible if we get that permission slip and Hermione tells me that there are a number of things that don't technically break the rules if we don't."

"Will that be all Mr. Potter?" Minerva asked automatically.

"Unless you want to recommend some books or positions," Harry agreed.

"Goodbye then Mr. Potter."

"Bye Professor," Harry said on his way out the door. Harry easily navigated the maze of halls and secret passages that led to the empty classroom where 'his' twin was waiting.

"Well?" Fred asked.

"Worked like a charm," the boy who looked like Harry Potter replied, "this promises to be a lunch to remember."

"Too right," Fred agreed, "nothing against Harry but he should really know better then to talk to our baby sister with that look on his face."

"Are we sure we didn't misinterpret that look?"

"Does it matter?"

"Nope, the possibility of pulling off a prank on three people for just a bit of polyjuice is too good to pass up."

IIIIIIII

Hermione looked up nervously when her Head of House approached during meal time.

"May I have a minute Ms. Granger?" Minerva asked sternly.

"What can I do for you Professor?" Hermione asked nervously. The girl rose to her feet and clenched her hands in distress.

"I just wanted to give you this permission slip for Harry and I've included a copy for you as well. Technically you'll only need the one, but things may change so I thought it best," Minerva said kindly.

"Thank you Professor," Hermione said automatically.

"Oh and this book," Minerva handed it over to her favorite student, "Mister Potter asked for advice and after much contemplation I finally managed to settle on this book . . . be sure to try pages fifteen and forty five, those are some of my favorite positions."

"We will Professor," Hermione agreed with a confused expression on her face.

"Finally take five points to Gryffindor for the way you noticed Mr. Potter's problems and your quick solution. I'm sure it'll help you as well. A relaxed student always scores better on tests than a tense one, it aides retention and recall."

"Thank you Professor," Hermione said with a blush. She wasn't sure what this was all about but there was no way she was turning down five free points and if Professor McGonagall said it would improve her grades than she was definitely going to do it.

"That is all," Minerva said kindly, "I imagine that you two have a busy afternoon planned and I don't want to keep you any longer then necessary."

"Yes Professor," Hermione agreed.

"Oh and one more thing." Minerva paused. "Just because something is only technical doesn't mean it isn't fun."

"Uh . . . I'll keep that in mind," Hermione said to Minerva's retreating back. She looked down at the things that Minerva had given her and her jaw dropped in shock. Well, she thought to herself, it doesn't sound unpleasant and Harry was certainly a much better choice than any other boy at school. 'God only knows who I'd end up with if all the good ones got taken and I got desperate.'

"Harry," Hermione said sweetly when she spied the boy in question walking up to the table.

"Yeah?" Harry asked.

"Come on." She grabbed him by the hand. "The permission slip has directions to an unused suite of rooms written on it."

"Okay?" He agreed with a puzzled look on his face. "Should we get Ron."

"Harry Potter," Hermione said with an outraged frown, "I am not that kind of girl."

"Uh . . . alright then," Harry said quickly, "just wanted to make sure?"

"Oh . . . well, let's get going. We don't want to waste any more time than we already have."

"No we don't," he said with a confused nod.

The twins just stared wide eyed as Hermione enthusiastically drug Harry off.

Ginny came in for lunch and noticed the twins behavior, wondering exactly what had blown up in their face this time. They always acted so shocked when one of their pranks failed.

Bending down she picked up a slip of parchment and began to read...

AN: Some polish by dogbertcarroll

Disclaimer: Part two of 'The Meaning of Fear.'

Note: The title for this did not come from the cartoon 'Dark Wing Duck.' In fact, I've never even heard of that cartoon and I'm insulted that you would even mention it. This Disclaimer is over.

I Am The Terror

James eagerly took the letter off the owl's leg and immediately ripped it open. That turned to shock and then rage as he read the contents.

"The bastard refused," James said in a whisper, "he won't agree to a duel."

"What?" Sirius asked in shock. "But . . . but once this gets out he'll be a pariah."

"He already is," Lily said harshly, "but this way he knows that there isn't a legal way that we can kill him. If we so much as lay a finger on him then Dumbledore'll have the Aurors on us."

"Are you sure about that?" Remus asked, hoping that they were wrong about the man who had done so much for them.

"Albus sent me a note of his own," Lily said in disgust, "explaining that 'Severus' had been responsible for Harry's death and that it was okay because 'Severus' was sorry. He added that 'Severus' was under his protection and that he would not allow any misguided attempts to get revenge."

"Can we call the Aurors on him?" Sirius said suddenly. "I'm sure they . . ."

"Won't do a thing," Lily interrupted, "not when the Chief Wizard is on the side of the accused."

"So that's it then," Remus said in defeat, "we can't do anything."

"I don't have any kids," Sirius offered, "or a wife to take care of. I'll do it."

"No," Lily said firmly, "we'd just be trading you for Snape."

"And you're worth ten of him mate," James said emotionally, "you too Remus, even with your monthly problem."

"There is someone else," Lily said with a smile, "someone who insisted that Dumbledore swear several unbreakable vows promising to shield them from prosecution."

"I think he also slipped in getting sworn in as a member of Law Enforcement," James added with a smile, "and god knows what else. Good thinking Lils, but who's gonna ask him?"

"Every boy should get to spend time with their father," Lily said firmly, "don't you agree dear?"

"Of course my love," James said quickly. Maybe he could get Harry to hand over his proxy for the family votes? It wasn't much but it would break Lily's pesky three fourth's majority she needed to change the family constitution.

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Luna crawled into Harry's lap and rested her head on his shoulder. She marveled at the way he automatically shifted so that his view of the book wouldn't get interrupted. "Harry," she sighed in content.

"I missed you too," Harry said, "and I'm glad you found a way to join me."

"Was I a good girl then?" She asked hopefully.

"And good girls get rewards," Harry agreed.

"Mmmmm." Luna nuzzled Harry's neck. She didn't even look up when the door opened, Harry was too relaxed for it to be a threat.

"Am I interrupting something?" James asked.

"Not at all," Harry said grandly.



"Got a moment Harry," James asked as he sat down next to his 'son.' He averted his eyes to avoid watching the way the blond on the Harry's lap nibbled at his jaw line.

"What can I do for you James?" Harry asked, squeezing Luna in just the right way to produce a cute little 'squeak.'

"Does your contract with Dumbledore allow you to take other jobs?"

"Like what?"

"Like Snape is refusing my request to meet on the field of honor," James said heatedly, "along with Lily's, Remus's, Sirius's, and a half dozen others."

"You want me to persuade him to meet you?"

"I want you to show the world why one does not mess with the Potter family," James said savagely, "I want him to die screaming, I want him to beg for death, I want him to feel just a small measure of the pain Lily and I feel every day since the death of our son."

"Speaking of Lily," Harry said thoughtfully, "does she know about this request of yours?"

"It was her idea," James replied, "we don't have the knowledge to do a proper job of it . . . might not have the guts either I suppose. But you, you can do it."

"I can," Harry agreed, "anyone else?"

"Peter if you see him," James added quickly, "and is there anything you can do about Dumbledore?"

"I have my own bone to pick with him," Harry replied, "one which will be addressed in due time."

"Thank you," James said gratefully, "how much?"

"Send him an estimate Luna," Harry ordered. He tilted his head down and whispered into her ear, "be sure to give them the family discount."

"Yes Harry," Luna agreed.

"Was there anything else James?"

"Nothing business related," James said quickly.

"Personal then?"

"Lily was hoping . . . that is to say that Lily and I were hoping that you would come over for dinner," James said slowly, as if he'd rehearsed the line a hundred times.

"When?"

"Anytime with an hour notice," James replied, "less if you need less. Oh, it can also be any meal if you like."

"Arrange it Luna."

"I will Harry," Luna agreed. Her hands disappeared under his shirt.

"And uh . . . I also wanted to ask you a few things," James added, "if you're not busy."

"Not at all," Harry said grandly.

"Did you play Quidditch?"

"What?"

"Quidditch," James repeated himself, "doesn't matter what house you were in so long as you were on the team."

"So if I were say . . . the Slytherin Keeper?"

"I'd ask if it was a good team," James said firmly, "faling that if you were a good Keeper."

"Seeker, Gryffindor."

"YES," James cheered, "at least one . . ."

"At least one what?"

"Can we put off this conversation until we eat?" James begged. "Or at least until Lily's here with us."

"If you like." Harry leaned in and whispered something into Luna's ear, causing the girl to shudder in delight.

"We could do it tonight," Luna suggested, "so long as you don't mind having your dinner here."

"Not at all," James said, "but I thought we'd use my home." He tore his eyes away from the way the blond wiggled and jiggled in the boy's lap. James pushed down an irrational surge of jealousy, when he was Harry's age, he was happy to get a grope through three layers of clothing.

"We have plans for after the dinner," Luna explained, "for immediately after dinner."

"I see." He didn't. "I'll set things up with Sirius."

Neither member of the couple bothered to look up as James made his exit.

IIIIIIII

Dinner was a tense and silent affair. Lily kept opening her mouth to make conversation, but nothing came to mind and she would inevitably go back to her meal. This wasn't how they'd expected it to be, this wasn't how it should be. Harry was their son, sort of, there shouldn't be this distance between them.

James felt a crunch as he bit down and he felt a shoot of agony from one of his teeth.

"What's wrong," Harry asked upon noticing James's wince of pain.

"Think I chipped a tooth," James replied.

"Let me see," Harry ordered.

"Why," James asked suspiciously, still not ready to trust his 'son.'

"I know a little something about dentistry," Harry replied. His smile faded as he remembered having to tell Hermione's parents that their daughter was gone. The two dentists had proved to be invaluable to the cause, both for their knowledge of medicine and their ability to make even the most hardened Death Eater talk. "I don't normally use it for healing, but I know enough to tell you if there's anything seriously wrong."

"Oh. What do you normally use it for?"

"Do you really want me to tell you," Harry asked with a raised eyebrow.

"No," Lily said quickly, before James could respond.

"Thought not."

|||||||

Severus was in the Hogwarts Hospital Wing recovering from his injuries. He'd always thought that he was tough, always thought that he knew evil, always thought that he could endure anything. Always thought that until he met him, the boy with the killing curse eyes. He suppressed a shudder, he was under no illusions as to what would have happened if Lily Potter hadn't summoned Albus Dumbledore and he didn't permit himself to believe that the Headmaster held any power over the stranger. Harry Potter had allowed Dumbledore to take his prisoner for some reason of his own, not because the boy feared or respected the old wizard. Severus knew that he was safe only so long as Harry Potter allowed it and for the first time in years, he felt fear.

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"Luna," Harry called out, "entertain Lily for a bit while I speak with James."

"Yes Harry," Luna agreed. She took Lily by the hand and gently pulled the woman out of the room.

"Doesn't it ever bother you," Lily asked. "The way he orders you about like that."

"I think there's something you need to understand about me Lily," Luna said to the other woman, "and that is the fact that I will do anything that Harry tells me to do, with a smile on my face and a song in my liver, because it's Harry telling me to do it. If Harry told me to kill you and everyone else in this floor then there is nothing on earth that could stop me."

Luna looked thoughtful for a moment. "A small part of me thinks that the sun rises because Harry wants it to and the rest of me knows that he would stop it if he wished to. Like I said before, it's not a healthy relationship but it's what we have."

"Oh."

"I wasn't always this way," Luna continued with a smile, "over exposure to the Cruciatus Curse tends to change a person."

"I'm sorry to hear that."

"It's fine," Luna chirped, "I was never all that sane in the first place so it wasn't that great a loss."

"I . . . oh."

"How about I tell you a story," Luna suggested, "would you like that?"

"Sure," Lily agreed.

"This is a story about one of Harry's very best friends," Luna began, "a girl he befriended in his first year . . . I think that you would have liked her. She was intelligent, honest, had an innate sense of fairness, and she never let the war dehumanize her. If she had survived, I very

much doubt that Harry would have shown the world just how far he was willing to go . . . some say that it was her death that made him a monster. I say that the funeral could have used a bit of music to liven things up. Oh, and the cake was a bit dry too."

"How did she die?"

"She died defending a group of children, some only a few months younger than herself, from an even larger group of Death Eaters," Luna said with a dreamy look in her eye, "the fact that every one of those children was the child of a Death Eater or sympathetic family, probably didn't even register."

"Noble," Lily said with a nod.

"Stupid," Luna retorted, "it was a trap of course. If our friend had run, not a single child would have been hurt. She was blind to a being's color, race, and family line. In the end, those noble ideals were what killed her."

"And Harry got his revenge," Lily asked, "a revenge so terrible that they . . ."

"Oh no," Luna disagreed, "Harry didn't do anything . . . not for several months anyway."

"Then what . . ."

"They tried the same trick with him," Luna giggled, "they couldn't resist."

"What happened?"

"They had him trapped in one of the shops in Diagon Alley," Luna began, "and it was filled with children . . . the vast majority of which were the spawn of Death Eaters. Harry selected one of the Death Eater children and dragged him to the door as a human shield, he ordered them to put down their wands and surrender or he would begin killing hostages every half hour on the half hour."

"He didn't," Lily gasped.

"He did," Luna said calmly, "they told him he was bluffing . . . they laughed at him." Luna giggled. "They stopped laughing when he killed the first hostage and told them they had thirty minutes before the next."

"No . . ."

"After the battle we learned that of the sixteen Death Eaters that attacked that day, nine of them had children in that shop with Harry Potter. They took six Death Eaters alive that day and we didn't loose a single friendly." Luna's smile dropped. "Harry would have never done it if they hadn't started things off. Since they had cast their morality out, Harry felt that he was under no obligation to show civility."

"Oh . . . oh . . ." Lily heaved.

"That's why you brought him here isn't it?" Luna asked coldly. "To do what you lacked the stomach to do for yourself?"

"Luna I . . ."

"But I'm sure it was the only thing you all could do," Luna continued, "why take care of a problem yourself when you could just kidnap someone to do it for you."

"We didn't . . ."

"And to top it all off, you're so smugly sure that you have the moral highground that it lets you ignore that fact."

"Would it help to say I'm sorry?" Luna asked.

"It might," Luna allowed, "have you tried?"

"Luna, I'm so . . ."

"Don't tell me," Luna interrupted, " you already told me that. Besides, I'm the one that chose to come here."

"I'll tell Harry when we get back," Lily promised.

"Thank you."

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The Headmaster didn't show his face for several days but when he finally did, his demands more than made up for the brief time they had without his insane ideas.

"You want me to go to Hogwarts?" Harry asked in shock.

"You are . . . you do appear to be a fifth year," Dumbledore pointed out with a smile. "And you have no record of schooling in this world. All that could make it difficult to get a job don't you think?"

"So."

"So it might be nice to have some credentials, time at Hogwarts would do that for you." Dumbledore stroked his beard. "You can of course refuse, but I would recommend getting some sort of paper trail regardless of what you do."

"And it would allow you to keep a close eye on me," Harry added.

"Yes . . . well . . ."

"I don't see the need to attend Hogwarts," Harry said blandly, "thanks to you, I am quite wealthy after all."

"But . . ."

"If you want me to go to Hogwarts then you will need to find some way to make it worth my while," Harry interrupted, "as it is, I already have access to the facilities."

"I shall think of something to offer," Dumbledore promised.

"Before you do," Harry said with a smile, "any agreement we make has to explicitly note that I am permitted to carry out any personal business without fear of punishment or reprisal."



"Ms. Lovegood," Dumbledore asked with a raised eyebrow, hiding a smirk in his beard as he considered what someone Harry's apparent age would consider 'personal business'.

"For the most part," Harry agreed. Not to mention Snape and anyone that annoys me.

"As long as it's for their own actions and not the actions of their counterparts," Dumbledore hedged. "Not that Snape is likely to do anything to purposefully annoy you after having spent time in your... care."

"Agreed." Harry nodded thoughtfully.

"What brought this on anyway," Harry asked mildly.

"The Potters have been talking about withdrawing their children," Albus said reluctantly, "and several other families have made noises that lead me to believe that I will soon be the Headmaster of an empty school."

"So firing your pet murderer and resigning in disgrace never crossed your mind did it," Harry asked idly, hiding his shock at having siblings. "I'm sure that this would all blow over if the main causes were gone."

"Yes . . . well . . . I was hoping that your presence would be enough to convince them . . ."

"That their children would be protected against you and Snape," Harry interrupted. "I'm not a babysitter or a bodyguard."

"None the less, anticipating your terms, I've completed a new contract that covers compensation for your time at Hogwarts." Dumbledore took some pages out of his jacket. "We can of course raise the amount if you wish."

"Add that I don't have to attend class, participate in any activities, or sleep in my assigned dorm, or just follow any of the rules in general, and you have yourself a deal."

"How about only having to go to Defense classes," Dumbledore countered. "Would you be willing to agree to that?"

"Who's the Professor," Harry asked, as he considered the long string of Defense Professors that had attempted to kill him and idly wondering if that was actually part of Tom's curse on the position.

"That remains to be seen," Dumbledore demurred, "but if the Professor is not to the highest standards then I will cancel this contract . . . you have my word."

"Deal," Harry agreed with a smirk, figuring the new Professor would probably try to kill him within a forth night and he'd have free run of the school and some additional pocket change, as well as making Dumbledore look like an idiot. His smile disappeared as he read the contract. "You bloody bastard."

"Something wrong Harry," Dumbledore asked with twinkling eyes.

"You never said you were hiring me," Harry accused.

"You never asked," Dumbledore pointed out.

"You said I was young and . . . you rat bastard," Harry laughed. "Okay, I'll give you this round. You want me to do a good job then agree to let me teach the way I want to teach."

"Of course," Dumbledore said quickly, "so long as it's effective and unbiased."

"I'll agree to that after I confirm that the other instructors are held to the same standard," Harry retorted.

"I . . . fine," Dumbledore sighed, but I'd like to point out that by doing a good and impartial job you may actually sway some more people, that would join Voldemort otherwise, to your side and finish the job a little quicker with a bit less bloodshed needed?"

Harry stroked his chin thoughtfully.

Dumbledore chalked himself a tentative point in the win column and quickly changed the subject. "I presume that you'll want to bring Ms. Lovegood with you?"

"I doubt that you'd be able to keep her away. Who do you have teaching right now and is hiring me going to be a problem?"

"I have an Auror on loan from the Department of Magical Law Enforcement," Dumbledore said, "and he will be more than happy to get back to work and out of Hogwarts."

|||||||

While Harry was having his talk with Dumbledore, Luna had been forced to find other ways to entertain herself.

"May I pretty please have twenty pounds," Luna requested with fluttering eyelashes.

"What for," Lily asked suspiciously, having two daughters that had inherited their father's pranking genes had long ago rendered her immune to innocent looks.

"Harry has given me permission to do whatever I wish today," Luna replied, "and I wish to make you an only child."

"I'm not going to help you kill my sister," Lily said flatly.

"But she did all sorts of horrid things to Harry," Luna whined, "it's only fair that I get to express my displeasure. It's not fair that Death Eaters got to her first." Luna whined, like a child being denied sweets.

"No."

"What if we make sure she's evil first," Luna suggested, "then may I douse her house with petrol and block the exits before burning it to the ground."

"No, no arson."

"You're no fun," Luna said with a pout. Her smile returned as she remembered that there were several things that she could do that, while horrifying, didn't count as arson.

"You may accompany me while I visit her," Lily offered, "and if she's as bad as you say then we will report her to the police. No arson."

When they arrived at the Dursley house, Luna walked right up the door and began impatiently pounding on the door.

"Yes," Petunia said as she answered the door, "what can I do for you?" The years hadn't been kind to Petunia Dursley, she looked worn and had aged considerably since the last time she'd seen her sister.

"It's me Petunia," Lily said.

"Lily," Petunia sobbed. She surprised both of the other women by enveloping her sister in a hug. "Oh Lily."

"What's wrong Petunia?" Lily asked. She patted her sister awkwardly, this was not how she expected their reunion to go.

Over the next couple of hours and over several cups of tea, the entire story came out. It seemed that while this Petunia was different from her analog. In contrast Vernon Dursley had a lot in common with his counterpart, he was mean, petty, spiteful, and just a generally unpleasant odious foul excuse for a human being. He also did not have Harry to bully and use as a scapegoat for everything that seemed to go wrong in his life.

"You simply must come stay in the spare room," Lily said sympathetically, "you can't stay here."

"Would it be okay?" Petunia asked. "I couldn't imagine that you'd want to see me again, not after all those terrible things I said about you."

"We're family," Lily said firmly, as if that explained everything.

Luna was sorely disappointed that she hadn't been permitted to do anything to Petunia Dursley, but found some minor amusement in

placing some subtle curses on Vernon at Petunia's behest. She also consoled herself with the fact that he hadn't been told not to arrange any fiery accidents for Vernon. Making a mental note to ask Harry if he wanted in on the fun later, Luna happily skipped after the Evans sisters as they left Privet Drive.

|||||

The students watched with undisguised curiosity as the blond sitting on the lap of the man that Dumbledore had introduced as their new Defense Professor and carefully fed him his breakfast. Luna, for her part, ignored the stares as she spooned another serving of oatmeal into Harry's mouth.

"Look after the Potter twins," Harry ordered between mouthfuls.

"Yes Harry," Luna agreed.

"Be prepared to tell me what types of people they are," Harry added, "I'm curious about the sort of parents the Potters are."

"Of course Harry," Luna agreed.

|||||

Ron gave what he thought was a devilishly handsome smile to the two Potter twins as they walked towards their first class.

"Hello Ladies," he purred, "care to keep me company on the next Hogsmead trip?" In looks, both girls heavily favored their mother which made them delectable examples of the female form. Besides, they were twins and since the Patils had refused his advances . . .

Ron wasn't sure what happened next. One minute he was making his move, the next thing he knew there was a sharp pain in his stomach.

Ron doubled over at Luna's punch and he fell after her follow up. Luna reached down and lifted the boy off the ground by his collar.

"Should I kill him?" Luna addressed the Potter sisters. Upon hearing no response, she turned to regard them with wide innocent eyes. "Well."

"No don't."

"He was just playing around," the other agreed, "understand."

"No," Luna said honestly, "I don't. In the future it might be best not to play this sort of game again."

"I gotta go," Ron whimpered, he turned and fled.

"I do believe he messed himself," Luna said conversationally.

"Who are you?" One of the Potter twins asked.

"I'm Luna," she replied, "the assistant Defense Professor." She smiled at the two girls. "I'm going to be accompanying the two of you today."

IIIIIIIIII

Luna met up with Harry after the classes had finished and she was eager to be back with the man who had been her constant companion since they'd finished the war.

"I hear you overreacted to something Ron did today," Harry said when Luna strolled into their assigned quarters.

"I still haven't forgiven him for that time he put gum in my hair," Luna said with a sniff.

"When was that?"

"I believe that it was my seventh birthday party," Luna replied.

"Ah . . . so it didn't have anything to do with our Ron's desertion then," Harry said with a nod, "I understand."

"Nothing at all," Luna agreed, "I don't mind the fact that he tried to run off and leave us to face the Death Eaters alone." Luna's eyes narrowed in anger at the memory.

"He didn't volunteer to fight with us," Harry said with a shrug, "and he was just a child."

"He volunteered the moment he became your friend," Luna said harshly, "and still could have backed out years before it mattered. When it finally mattered, little Ron got a wake up call. He could get hurt, war wasn't fun like he thought it would be. No, it alternated between mind numbing terror and mindless boredom and there wasn't enough glory to fill a thimble. He's lucky they got him before I did."

"Alright," Harry sighed, "fair enough."

"Forgive me?"

"I was never angry with you," Harry assured the girl, "just wanted to know what happened and why."

"So, no punishment," Luna asked sadly.

"Now, I never said that," Harry replied.

Luna giggled as she rushed across the room and into his arms.

IIIIIIII

Dumbledore walked into the Defence Professor's office. He normally wouldn't have attended the meeting, Headmasters summoned their staff not the other way around, however this Professor was a notable exception to that rule.

"You wished to speak with me about something Harry," Dumbledore announced himself.

"Yeah," Harry agreed, "Luna was looking through the original school charter when she found something interesting."

"I presume that you're going to enlighten me."

"Turns out that the Defense Professor, originally called the 'Master-at-Arms,' is responsible for the defense of the school and the protection of the students in addition to their duties as an instructors."

"Please allow me to see that," Dumbledore asked eagerly. His eyes danced over the parchment. "Where did you find this?"

"Luna found it," Harry replied, "I didn't ask where."

"Please ask her to inform me if she finds anything else that dates to the founders," Dumbledore begged. He cast a couple charms to verify the age of the document. "Extraordinary that it's survived so long."

"I thought so," Harry agreed.

"I believe that we should frame it for display," Dumbledore mused, "do you have any suggestions as to where it should go?"

"How about the Great Hall," Harry suggested carefully, "and how about we change my title back to 'Master-at-Arms' to honor this discovery."

"Of course," Dumbledore agreed, "of course that's what we shall do. Excellent suggestion Harry."

"It was Luna's idea really," Harry said modestly. One would expect a printer's daughter to know a bit about forgery. "I can't take any credit for this."

"Would you accept an old man's request," Dumbledore asked.

"Perhaps."

"Be sure to reward her greatly for this," Dumbledore said, his eyes dropped back to the parchment, "extraordinary."

"Oh I will," Harry promised. "I also couldn't help but notice something else here."

"Another thing," Dumbledore said calmly. He wasn't sure what the boy's trick was, but he was going to be ready for it. "Do tell."



"Turns out that the Defense Department is responsible for the safety of the students and school," Harry said with a laugh, "hilarious since most of my Defense Professors tried to kill me."

"Yes . . .well, luckily we haven't had that problem here."

"I'm sure," Harry agreed.

Dumbledore began walking out of the room when he was struck by a sudden thought.

"Would you mind taking up that duty?" He asked hopefully, seeing it as another way to drag the boy back into the light.

"If you like," Harry said, "we have a Hogsmead weekend coming up don't we?"

"Two days," Dumbledore said.

"I'll have to draw my orders up quickly then," Harry said with a frown.

"Orders?"

"I am only one person," Harry said blandly, "two if you figure that Luna's like an extra set of hands. I can't assure their safety without help you know."

"Yes of course."

"If the staff or Prefects have any requests then have them see me," Harry added, "why not be accommodating we can, eh?"

"They won't be happy to have to change their weekend plans," Dumbledore promised.

"Too bad."

Indeed they weren't pleased, but not one of them was willing to complain after getting a look at Harry's flat dead eyes.

|||||||

Snape grumbled as he watched the last group of students return to the school. Why had the Headmaster insisted that he act out his part in that lunatic Potter's plan? No doubt it was because he wanted to foster some sort of reconciliation or some similar rot. Snape sneered, this new Potter was just as petty as his 'father.' Imagine deligating a task like patrolling the town to make sure that all the students had left to the Head of Slytherin? He rubbed the stumps where his thumbs used to be, perhaps it wasn't so bad as that.

"Severus Snape."

Snape turned around and to his horror, saw that he was being addressed by James Potter.

"Thou arte a coward," James growled. He pulled a glove off his belt and threw it at the greasy man. "Severus Snape, thou arte a killer. Severus Snape, you are responsible for the death of my son."

"Potter," Snape growled, "I am not going to allow you to engage me in some childish duel."

"Then I will kill you where you stand," James said firmly, "defend yourself or not. It makes no difference to me."

Snape's eyes swept over the growing crowd and noted that every exit route was blocked off by one of the Marauders or a grim faced Lily Potter.

"You can't do this," Snape screamed. He searched the crowd for any help, any friendly face. "Potter Please."

"I shall give you to the count of three to draw your wand," James said with deadly finality.

"Potter no."

"One."

"Think about what you're doing," Snape sobbed.

"Two."

"Lily please," Snape called out to his old friend, "I'm sorry. You can't let him do this."

"Three."

"NOOOOOO." Snape made a frantic grab for his wand. He got it half way out of its holster before being bisected by a dark purple curse.

"It's done," James said dully, "my son is avenged." He reversed the grip on his wand and offered it to one of the Aurors in the crowd.

"Keep it mate," the Auror said, "clearest cut case of self defense I ever saw."

The crowd murmured in approval and several offered statements to the effect that James had shown greater restraint than they would have under similar circumstances.

"Feel better?" Luna asked.

James's looked over at Harry's pet psychopath, his expressionless eyes bored holes through her.

"Just tell yourself this," Luna said, "he's never going to be able to hurt anyone else again."

"Does it help?" James asked.

"Does what help?"

"Does it help to tell yourself that?" James asked. "I should feel good but I just feel empty."

"I don't know," Luna admitted, "it never bothered me. Not after all that happened before we took the gloves off anyway."

"Lily," James sobbed. He embraced his wife tightly, telling himself over and over that at least his girls were safe from the man that had taken their older brother.

AN: Don't think I'll write much if anything more of this. Again, the title was definitely not a 'Dark Wing Duck' reference. Polish by dogbertcarroll.

Disclaimer: Part three of 'The Meaning of Fear' and I still maintain that part two's title was not a 'Dark Wing Duck' ref.

In Terrorem

“Looky,” Luna called out as she bounced across the Great Hall to the Head Table. “Looky, Looky, Looky.” She held out her hand proudly to present her find to Harry.

“Nice looking spoon,” Harry said approvingly, “where did you find it?”

“It was under the slate roof of the unused north tower,” Luna replied. She cradled the Rune Spoon of Antioch close to her chest.

“Would you like to try it out?”

“Yes please,” Luna said eagerly.

“After we get done with classes,” Harry said indulgently.

“Yay.”

To the consternation of most of the Professors and the amusement of the students, Luna climbed over the table and flopped into Harry's lap.

IIIIIIIIII

Luna had a look of profound serenity on her face as she stalked towards the bound woman. Harry had picked their next victim with cunning and care. They wanted to find someone that could be used to send a message to the community of 'ex' Death Eaters and sympathisers that infested the British Islands.

“You did a very naughty thing,” Luna purred, “people who do naughty things must be punished.”

“Please no,” she whimpered, “please.”

“Did your victims beg for mercy?” Luna asked intently.

“I . . .”

"How about I give you as much mercy as they got," Luna asked, "that sounds fair doesn't it?"

"No . . . NO . . . AHHHHHHARG."

Luna's rabbit punch to the throat silenced her victim and the blond went back to her task. After she'd finished, Luna skipped back to Harry to present her prize.

"Very nice Luna," Harry praised the girl. He ignored the moaning woman tied to the chair in the middle of the room. "Look what I've got for you."

"A jar?" Luna asked, she blinked in confusion.

"Not just a jar," Harry said, "it's more about what's in it."

"What's in it?" Luna asked obediently.

"A very mysterious liquid." He grabbed the girl around the waist and pulled her close. "One that hardens when exposed to air."

"So that I can make myself a unique and tasteful paperweight." Luna squealed. "Oh Harry, thank you."

"Only the best for my girl," Harry said fondly.

"But who was she and what did she do?" Luna asked.

"Does it matter?"

"No," Luna said, "not unless you say it does."

"She was an alibi," Harry explained, "for hire. Several Death Eaters escaped prison because of her."

"Oh."

"She had a line that she was fond of using," Harry continued, "she used to tell the court that the defendant couldn't possibly have committed the crimes that they were accused of because 'she had

her eyes on them the whole time.' I thought she was an appropriate test of that new spoon of yours."

"Mmmmm." Luna rubbed her cheek on his chest.

IIIIIIII

Harry's first class of the day was the quietest and best behaved class seen by any Hogwarts Professor in a number of years. The news of how Harry had set Snape up for death had quickly spread throughout the school and the rumors of what secrets lurked in their Professor's past was more than enough to keep the peace.

After class, Hermione nervously approached the Professor and his assistant who were both waiting by the door to field any questions.

"Professor . . . um . . ." Hermione just couldn't bring herself to address a Professor by his first name. She also couldn't bring herself to look anywhere near his desk after accidentally meeting the gaze of his assistant's new paperweight.

"Yes," Harry replied. His eyes were the only thing that didn't show utter calm, they reflected loss.

"I was just wondering why you had an assistant."

"And you wanted to know how you could become one of the other Professor's assistants, yes?"

"Yes," Hermione admitted with a blush.

"Luna is a special case. She's . . . she's like a second pair of hands," Harry explained.

"I'm very good at any type of job for Harry that requires hands," Luna chirped, "Harry gives me lots of practice."

"Uh . . ." To be honest, Hermione wasn't quite sure how to take that.

"But to answer your real question, I'd advise you to ask Professor McGonagall or Professor Flitwick if they would like a bit of help."

"Thank you Professor," Hermione squeaked.

The two killers watched as the girl with their deceased friend's face skipped out of the room. Neither of them spoke, what could they have possibly said.

|||||

Luna woke up when the warm spot that signified Harry to her sleeping mind disappeared. Her eyes opened slowly to see the one man that ment everything to her looking down with a smile on his face.

"Do you know what day it is Luna?" Harry asked as the sleepy blond rubbed her eyes.

"No Harry."

"It's our anniversary," Harry said grandly, "the day you swore yourself to me."

"But I thought that it was not for another six months," Luna said in confusion. She was perfectly prepared to trust Harry's word of course, but a girl liked to know why sometimes.

"Check the calender," Harry said with a smile, "there seem to be a bit of a time differential between here and our world, but we can have another celebration later if you like."

"Then we'll have two anniversaries?" Luna asked hopefully.

Harry gave an indulgent nod.

"Yay."

"Come along," Harry commanded, "I have a lot of things planned."

"As you wish," Luna agreed.

|||||

The Potter twins frowned in confusion as they reread the note they'd received from their parents categorically forbidding prank, bother, or



spend time alone with the mysterious new Defence Professor or his assistant.

"What do you think it means?" The 'slightly' older twin asked.

"I think it mean that we should find out more about our new professor," the other twin replied, "and about why Uncle Sirius and Remus sent notes of their own."

"Yeah."

|||||||

"This house contains ten people," Harry lectured, "two Death Eaters and several sympathizers."

"May I pretty please kill them all," Luna begged, remembering what had happened to a second year Puff that Avery had grabbed for his initiation ceremony.

"Well . . . leave one alive to talk about what they saw."

"Yes Harry," Luna said with a disappointed pout.

"Alive doesn't mean not nailed to the front door," Harry told the girl, "or in good condition."

"And if they aren't strong enough to live through what I'm going to do to them, it's their problem."

"Not yours," Harry agreed, "have fun love."

Harry sat down to enjoy the sunshine as he waited for his minion to finish up the bloody work of exterminating the Avery family.

"Should have brought a book," he said to himself as the screams began, "ah well."

Harry got up two hours later when the screams stopped and walked towards the door. Luna was waiting for him when he arrived.

"Would you pretty please hold him up while I nail him to the door," Luna asked sweetly. The girl was literally covered in blood from head to toe, her eyes the only things not stained red.

"Of course Luna," Harry agreed. He grabbed the trembling man by the shoulders and pushed him into the door. "Anything for you."

Harry ignored the screams as Luna drove the first spike through the man's hand.

"You know better than that," he sighed, "you need to put them through the wrists to hold him up."

"I was going to do that next," Luna explained, "I found extra nails in the house."

"Never mind then," Harry said glibly, "I'm sorry I doubted you."

Luna giggled happily as she drove the next spike through the wrist and her giggles turned to laughter as she finished up her bloody work.

"And that is that," she said as she put the last nails through the man's feet. "Pity the door wasn't higher though."

"He's off the ground," Harry said calmly, "and that's all that matters."

"I suppose," Luna said critically, "but I really think that it would look prettier if we had him another six inches up."

"We can do that next time," Harry said indulgently.

"Yay," Luna cheered. She threw her arms around Harry, sending tiny droplets of blood flying everywhere and rubbed her cheek on his chest.

"Now let's go get you cleaned up," he continued, "can't have you looking like this when we get our lunch."

"Why not?"

"They frown on that sort of thing at the place I have reservations," Harry explained, "snooty."

“Formal?”

“Semi.”

“Alright then,” Luna said with a nod, “will you shower with me?”

“Of course.”

|||||

Luna gazed at Harry across the table with a look of near worship on her face. What she felt for him went beyond mere love and loyalty, he was her everything and it was times like this, times when he went out of his way to arrange a special day that she remembered what had first drawn her to the Potter boy.

“How did you like our special day Luna?” Harry asked the girl.

“It was wonderful Harry,” Luna gushed, “everything I could have hoped for and more.”

“Day isn't over yet,” Harry said with a smile, “I have one more event planned before the big finale.”

“Does the big finale involve us getting some hot sticky personal fun?” Luna asked hopefully. “Of the bedroom sort,” she added thinking of all the hot sticky sorts of fun that didn't involve things described in the Kama Sutra.

“Of course,” Harry assured the girl, “but before that.”

“Yes.”

“I've arranged a little family reunion for you. Which one of your relatives was it that died before you had a chance to show them how you felt about them?”

“Truly,” Luna squeaked.

“Truly,” Harry confirmed.

|||||

Lucius Malfoy wasn't sure what had happened. The last thing he remembered, he was sitting in his study plotting ways to siphon funds out of one of the numerous charities that were under his control and now he appeared to be tied up and blindfolded.

"I don't know who you are," Lucius growled, "but you have no idea who you are messing with."

"On the contrary," a strange voice laughed, "I know exactly who you are."

Lucius blinked as the blindfold was roughly pulled off. He turned to regard his attacker and was not reassured when he made a tentative identification.

"You're the new Defense Professor at Hogwarts," Lucius accused, "you can't do this." Rumor of what the man had done in the past had reached Lucius. He hadn't thought it any cause for concern in the past, who was daft enough to challenge the might of the Malfoy family after all. Now though, now he wasn't so sure.

"Tell me Lucius," Harry said in a pleasant tone, "have you ever heard of a blood eagle?"

"No," Lucius gasped, "you can't." One look at the man's face had debased Lucius of any notion that the whole thing was a pantomime of some sort.

"I can," Harry purred, "I think you meant to say 'you won't.' And if you did, then you are quite correct."

"Then . . ."

"Because she is going to do it for me," Harry said as Luna entered the room.

"Hello," Luna said with a serene look on her face, "it's been a while hasn't it Uncle Lucius?"

"You can't be," Lucius said, "you're dead . . . I arranged it myself."

“Good to know,” Luna said cheerfully as she approached the bound man, “say goodbye uncle Lucius.”

“No . . . . no . . . NOOOOOOOOOOOOOO.”

IIIIIIIIII

Amelia didn't bother looking towards the sound of one of her Aurors getting violently and messily sick. It was something she wished she'd been able to do herself, a luxury she wasn't permitted. The Head of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement had to set an example after all.

“Report,” she barked.

“It's nasty Chief,” the senior investigator on the scene said, “worse than anything I've ever seen the Death Eaters do before . . . and to some of their own too.”

“We sure it was Death Eaters?”

“Who else could it be Chief?” The man asked. “We got one survivor who refuses to talk about who did this and why. No other group does things like this, I got nothing else.”

“Survivor?”

“Poor bastard was nailed to the front door,” the Auror said sickly, “his eyes were burned out and his genitalia was removed by some sort of blunt object.”

“No Dark Mark?”

“None Chief.”

“I know that a completely different thought occurs to me when I hear about a crime like this,” Amelia said with a cold grin, “considering who the victims are and what their beliefs were.”

"Can't say I don't follow your logic Chief," the Auror agreed quickly, "but we don't have any other suspects. Dumbledore's people wouldn't do something like this and I'm positive it wasn't done by one of ours."

"Why not?"

"Cause they didn't ask if I wanted in," the Auror admitted, "which they would have if it was some of our boys."

"Alright," Amelia agreed, "then what . . ."

"Then what we have is a fourth group," the Auror said, "off the record. On the record, I'm still going to blame the Death Eaters for this."

"So noted, I . . ."

"Got another one Chief," a young Auror called as she arrived, "this one's bad."

"How bad?"

"Like the sort of thing I read about in history books bad," the woman said breathlessly, "I think it's best if you were to see for yourself."

"Who's the vic?"

"Lucius Malfoy."

"Couldn't have happened to a nicer guy," Amelia said with a grin, "come on."

IIIIIIII

The matron of the Greengrass family allowed herself to raise an eyebrow in surprise when she identified the bedraggled person standing on her doorstep.

"Narcissa," she said with a cultured smile, "it's been too long."

"May I come in?" Narcissa asked formally.

"Of course," she agreed, "what can I do for you?"

"Thank you Madame Greengrass," Narcissa said woodenly, "I have a favor to ask of thee."

"Narcissa please, call me Nicole."

"Thank you . . . Nicole."

"Now what's this favor you've come to ask?"

"We'd like you to approach Dumbledore on our behalf to ask him what it will take to call off his dogs," Narcissa said with a shudder.

"Just who exactly is we?"

"Several people who have family that chose to enter the service of the Dark Lord."

"I see, what do you mean by dogs?"

"Something has been hunting Death Eaters and sympathisers," Narcissa explained, "and whatever it is doesn't seem to discriminate between active and passive supporters."

"Does Lucius know you're here?"

"Lucius is dead," Narcissa said flatly, "taken from our home and . . . and the Aurors told me what happened to him after that."

"I see."

"Please just pass on the message," Narcissa begged, "please."

"Of course Narcissa," Nicole agreed, "I'd be happy to help you in this matter."

"And I in turn will be happy to help you with another matter in the future."

"So mote it be."

AN: The blame for this part goes to meteoricshipyards. He made a comment that started the whole thing off. Polish by dogbertcarroll. On

a personal note, I've arranged internet for my apartment and will (hopefully) start posting fics again.

Mini Omake by Ed Becerra

"Run, it's Harry Potter!"

"Why should I run, I'm no damned Death Eater?"

"Harry's been eating garlic cheddar cheese again!"

"AUUUUUGH! EVERYBODY RUN!"

snrk

And on Dumbledore's side of things:

"Garlic? In cheddar cheese? Obviously this store MUST somehow be part of a Dark-inspired plot. I must contact the American Department of Magic, as soon as possible. They must know of this threat..."



Disclaimer: Written more as a friendship fic then as a romance fic.

## The Training of The Shrew

Hermione was eating lunch alone, while the other two members of the 'Golden Trio' were off playing a pickup game of Quidditch, when she noticed Luna sitting alone at the Ravenclaw table. The sight reminded her a bit of herself before she came to Hogwarts and as she took another look at the lonely looking Ravenclaw she came to a sudden decision.

Luna looked up as the other girl approached and braced herself for the worst. 'Don't let her see she's getting to you,' Luna reminded herself, 'just keep smiling and she'll get bored and go away.'

"Hi," Hermione said with a friendly smile, "can I sit here?"

"If you like," Luna agreed. She ruthlessly suppressed the surge of hope she felt as the girl sat down, telling herself that it must be a trick of some sort.

"I always see you here alone and I thought you might like some company," Hermione explained, "I'm Hermione."

"Yes, I know," Luna said, "I'm Luna."

"Well Luna," Hermione said, remembering the words she'd been dying to hear from someone before she met Harry, "would you like to be friends?"

"I . . ." Luna's face went blank for a moment. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. "I think that I would like that very much." And thus the world changed.

IIIIIIII

Hermione was more than slightly annoyed at the expression on Ron's face when he asked her to accompany him to the ball. The smug look that told the entire world that he was offering her a great favor by even deigning to consider her as a possible escort. Still, he was her friend, so she resolved to let him down gently.

"I can't go to the ball with you, Ron," Hermione said, "I told you that someone already asked me."

"Who," Ron challenged, unable to believe that the bushy haired witch could get a date.

"If you must know," Hermione said with a raised chin. "Luna Lovegood and I are going as friends."

"Well drop her and . . ."

"Ron Weasley," Hermione interrupted, "I'm going to pretend you didn't say that. And if you think that I'm going to help you find a date now then you've got another thing coming." She turned around and stormed off in a huff. "Honestly."

"Can you believe her," Ron whined, wondering how he'd end up turned down by his backup plan for 'Looney' Lovegood, "mental."

|||||||

Luna listened as Hermione told her about Ron's 'generous offer' with a sense of melancholy, sure of what was coming.

"It's alright Hermione," Luna said with a look of studied indifference, "if you'd rather go to the ball with Ronald."

"What," Hermione squawked, "Whatever gave you that idea?"

"I just thought that . . ."

"I'm perfectly happy with our current arrangement Luna," Hermione assured the other girl. "Even if I wasn't going with you, there's little chance that I'd go with Ron of all people."

"Really?"

"You've seen him eat, haven't you," Hermione asked. "Not to mention his casual attitude regarding personal hygiene... oh, and Harry says that he snores. That puts you at least two ahead. Not sure how the

snoring thing would matter at a dance, but the other two things are both down checks."

"Yes," Luna agreed brightly, "I can see that . . . oh, and I don't snore either."

"Wonderful."

IIIIIIIIII

Ron was waiting by the portrait for Hermione to slink back into the Common Room.

It wasn't hard to figure out where the girl had gone and when he thought about it, to go let Looney down gently of course, now that she had a real date for the ball.

Looking back, it was understandable why the girl had reacted the way she had when he'd first suggested dumping Looney Lovegood. Hermione liked to think that she was the champion of the overlooked and he really had been a bit harsh, should have taken the fact that she was a weak girl into account.

Ron had decided that he would forgive her for her earlier attitude, she couldn't help what she was, and would keep his offer to take her to the ball on the table.

"Ronald," Hermione greeted him curtly as she walked through the entrance, "have you thought about your previous behavior."

"I have," Ron agreed, "and I want you to know that I forgive you."

"You forgive me," Hermione growled. "You were the one being a perfect ass."

"What do you mean," Ron demanded, "you're the one that was going to take Looney Lovegood to the ball."

"Don't call her that," Hermione hissed, "Luna is a sweet girl and you shouldn't make fun of her like that."

"Fine," Ron said sourly, "I won't call her Looney anymore."

"Good."

"But I want you to wear a bit of make up when I take you to the ball," Ron continued, "do your best to make yourself look good."

"What do you mean when you take me?"

"You did break up with Loon . . . Luna didn't you?"

"Why would I do something like that?"

"Because it's unnatural," Ron shouted, "two girls going together like that."

"What did you say," Hermione asked coldly.

"I said it wasn't natural," Ron bellowed, "better get yourself a man before you're spoiled and no one else will touch you."

Hermione's face reddened in anger as she slapped the boy. With an upraised chin she spun on her heel and stormed out of the common room.

"Did you see what she did," Ron whined. He looked around and was surprised to find that there wasn't a single sympathetic expression in the common room.

The twins looked the closest of anyone to offering him genuine sympathy, but that turned out just to be a ruse to get close enough to dose him with a potion that kept Hermione's bright red hand print visible on his face for the next three days, and offering him the advice, that behaving like a Malfoy, who didn't get what he wanted, was no way to get a date from anyone.

|||||||

It didn't take long for Harry to find Hermione after the big blow up in the Common Room. She was in her favorite corner of the library, the same place she always went when she was feeling down.

"Harry," Hermione greeted the boy.

"Hermione," Harry asked in surprise. "I didn't think you'd be talking to me for a while." Not until after he spent five minutes explaining that living with the Dursley family had filled his lifetime-quota of intolerance, anyway.

"You weren't the one that . . . ohhh, he makes me so mad sometimes." Hermione took a deep breath.

"Mind if I sit down?"

"Go ahead," Hermione agreed.

"I just wanted to make sure you knew that you're my friend, no matter who you decide to go to the ball with," Harry said earnestly, "unless it's Malfoy."

"Thanks Harry," Hermione giggled, "I want you to know that the feeling is mutual. So long as neither of us decides to date Malfoy then we're good, right?"

"Right," Harry said firmly with a bit of a grin on his face, "and Luna is a far superior blond to the albino ferret on his best day and her worst."

The bushy haired bookworm was unable to suppress a chuckle at that.

"Anyway, do you still need a date for the dance?"

"Yeah," Harry replied.

"Do you mind if I ask around to see who else needs a date?" Hermione asked. "You'll still need to ask her of course."

"Thanks Hermione," Harry said in relief, "I really appreciate it."

"What are friends for Harry?"

IIIIIIII

Harry was slogging through his Potions homework when Hermione found him again after her search for a girl that would go to the ball with him.

"Hannah Abbot," Hermione said as she flopped onto the couch next to Harry.

"What?"

"Hannah Abbot," Hermione repeated. "Doesn't have a date and she thinks that you're cute."

"Really?"

"According to rumor anyway," Hermione qualified. She didn't want to make it too easy for him. "Better ask her quick before someone else does."

"You wouldn't happen to . . ."

"She's sitting in the library with Susan," Hermione interrupted, "good luck."

"Thanks Hermione." Harry sprang to his feet and rushed to the library. He didn't find Hannah, but he did find her friend sitting at one of the tables.

"Um . . . hi Susan," Harry said nervously, "do you know where Hannah is?"

"She's in the loo at the moment," Susan replied, "why?"

"I just wanted to ask her something," Harry said with a blush.

"Oh." Susan's expression turned predatory. "What did you want to ask her?" Harry didn't notice as her focus shifted to something behind him.

"I heard she didn't have a date to the ball and I was going to ask her to go with me," Harry replied, his blush deepened by several shades.

"Do you like her then," Susan demanded.

"She seems nice," Harry demurred.

"That didn't answer my question," Susan pointed out.

Harry just shrugged helplessly in reply. "Well I haven't got a chance to really know her."

"Do you know how to dance," Susan asked, "have you ever been to a ball before?"

"No."

"Then why should Hannah go with you?" Susan was relentless. "You don't like her, you don't know how to dance, what can you do?"

"I don't know," Harry said dejectedly, "never mind." He turned around to go and nearly ran into Hannah who was giving him a measured look.

"Alright," Hannah said suddenly, "I'll go with you."

"You don't have to," Harry said apologetically, his fragile ego still not quite recovered from Susan's assault, "I don't have much to offer as a date. It's probably best I go stag anyway."

"What . . . but . . ." Hannah sent a glare at her fellow Puff who winced, having expected Harry to be a very different person according to rumor and house.

"I'd like to go with you," Hannah blurted out, "and you could go to dancing lessons with us if you want," Hannah said. "Susan's aunty set them up."

"Can I invite Hermione," Harry asked. "And her date Luna," he added.

"I'll ask Aunty," Susan volunteered. "And Harry, I'm really sorry about how I treated you. It's just . . . you're not how I expected you to be."

"It's okay," Harry said glumly, "I'm used to it."

That reply left Susan feeling all of two inches tall, as she considered what his treatment at school had been like and admitted that she may

have been a trifle hard on him because she was feeling a bit jealous, but of which one she wasn't quite sure.

Shaking off her dour thoughts she resolved to do whatever she could to boost Harry's reputation within Hufflepuff house to make up for her previous attitude.

|||||||

Hufflepuff house came down to their common room to find Susan Bones with a 'Hufflepuffs for Potter' button on her robe and a slightly belligerent look on her face. After a few minutes, she was joined by Hannah Abbot who donned her own pin while the rest of the house watched from the other side of the room until Cedric came down the stairs.

"How much," Cedric asked with a cheerful smile.

"Huh?"

"Per pin," Cedric said, "I'd like two."

"Two Sickles each," Susan replied, "or one and I'll show you how if you promise to make more of them."

"Can you have it soon," Cedric asked hopefully. "I'd like to wear it to breakfast."

"Yeah," Susan agreed, "just give me a few minutes."

"Great, I'll be back in a few then." With that pronouncement, Cedric turned and walked back up the stairs to the boy's dorms.

As soon as the Hufflepuff champion had left the room, Susan and Hannah were mobbed by orders. It seemed that the house decided as a block that if Cedric, their champion, was supporting Harry, then Harry's claims about being forced to compete were probably true.

They all remembered the 'Heir of Slytherin' fiasco and what a black eye it gave the Puffs for blaming the boy who eventually solved the



problem, and none of them wanted to make the Puffs look bad like that again.

|||||||

Minerva came down to breakfast that morning and noted with approval the new adornments worn by nearly every member of Hufflepuff house and one notable member of Ravenclaw.

"I'm dating a puff," Cho had explained, "so far as they're concerned, that makes me one of them."

It was that show of loyalty and house solidarity that prompted the Deputy Headmistress to do something that she wouldn't normally have dreamed of.

"Ms. Lovegood," she said sharply, "a word."

"What is it Professor," Luna asked nervously. Her gaze dropped and she braced herself for what she knew was coming.

"I just wanted you to know that there is no rule preventing students from having their meals at another House's table," Minerva said.

"Really," Luna asked hopefully, her eyes shining.

"However," Minerva qualified. That one word swept away Luna's hopes and left the small blond more depressed then she could remember being for quite some time. "It is normally discouraged. "

"Oh," Luna said dully.

"I believe that any way of thinking that discourages school loyalty to be flawed at best," Minerva continued, "especially when Hogwarts is engaged in a contest with two other schools. That is why I am encouraging you to sit with Ms. Granger today," Minerva said gently.

"Oh, thank you Professor." Luna had tears going down her face.

"No need to thank me Ms. Lovegood," Minerva said calmly, "it is you that is doing me the favor after all."

"What favor is that?"

"Promoting school unity of course," Minerva replied, "don't hesitate to come to me if anyone gives you any trouble about this."

"I won't professor," Luna promised.

"Or anything else," Minerva added after a moment of thought, "I want to make sure that you know my door is open to every one of my students."

"I understand Professor," Luna said breathlessly

The few Gryffindor who witnessed the event nodded to each other and resolved to spread word of the unspoken adoption of Luna as one of her students by the Transfiguration mistress.

"Go to breakfast then," Minerva said with a shooing motion, "wouldn't want you to miss a meal."

"Yes Professor." Luna gave an awkward curtsy, before fleeing to the Gryffindor table.

Hermione had a quizzical expression on her face when she noticed the blonde's approach.

"May I sit with you Hermione," Luna asked carefully. "Professor McGonagall said that it was alright."

"Of course Luna," Hermione replied with a welcoming smile. She scooted over to give Luna some room between her and Harry. "You're always welcome here."

"Thank you Hermione," Luna said thickly, as Harry stole the place settings from the seat across from him and passed them to her.

Ron's furious scowl went completely unnoticed by the other two, as they tended to avoid looking directly at him while he was eating.

IIIIIIII

Amelia herself was waiting for them when they arrived at their first dance lesson and she regarded the group with an unreadable look on her face.

"May I borrow Harry for a few minutes," Amelia said. Her tone made it clear that it was not a request.

"Sure," Harry agreed.

Amelia noted with amusement that each of the girls had shot her a look of warning as she led Harry out of the room, even Luna, although it was rather hard to tell, as her warning gaze had been pointed at Amelia's left earlobe for some reason.

"I was wondering if you would mind answering some questions," Amelia said mildly.

"What do you want to know Madame Bones?" Harry asked.

"Harry please, call me Amelia."

"Alright."

"I just wanted to know how the security around the cup could have been breached," Amelia began, "do you have any ideas?" She was hoping to find out how a fourth year had managed it quickly, so they could move on to other topics.

"A couple," Harry admitted.

"Oh."

"Well, couldn't you crumple up pieces of paper and then throw them in . . . or I guess you could get someone older to drop it in for you."

"You can't think of any other ways," Amelia asked sweetly. She had to work hard to keep her expression pleasant, it was like pulling teeth.

Harry just shrugged helplessly in reply. "I wish I knew," Harry confessed, "then maybe I'd know who's trying to kill me this year."

"Explain that," Amelia barked. The pleasantness dropped leaving what her underlings termed 'the bitch face.' "Why do you think someone is trying to kill you this year?"

"Because someone's tried to kill me every year I've gone to Hogwarts," Harry replied.

"I know about Sirius Black in your third year," Amelia said with a nod, "what about the other two?"

"Sirius wasn't trying to kill me," Harry said in a low voice, "the Demeanors were."

"Yes, but Black was . . ."

"He's innocent," Harry said defiantly, "and he's my godfather."

"I know about him being your godfather," Amelia sighed, "would you care to explain why you think he's innocent?"

"Peter Pettigrew did it," Harry replied hotly, "he even admitted it."

"Harry, Peter Pettigrew is dead."

"No he isn't," Harry said stubbornly, "I saw him. He faked his death and hid in his animagus form."

"He isn't registered," Amelia said dumbly, "then again neither am I."

"You're an animagus?"

"A shrew," Amelia admitted, "and I'd appreciate you not spreading that around. I might be obligated to arrest myself if that came out." She rejoiced at the boy's laugh. "Do you think you could prove your allegations?"

"How could I do that," Harry asked, "Fudge didn't believe me when I told him."

"Do you know what a pensieve is Harry?"

Harry shook his head to indicate that, no he didn't know what a pensieve was.

"It's a device for collecting and showing memories," Amelia explained. "Would you be willing to use one to prove your assertions?"

"Yes," Harry agreed, "and I might be able to get Sirius to . . . uh . . ."

"Why don't we just set that aside," Amelia offered. "Tell me about your second year, who tried to kill you then?"

"Voldemort's specter opened up the Chamber of Secrets and I would have died if it weren't for Dumbledore's phoenix." He pulled up his sleeve to show one of the scars. "Here's where I got bit by the basilisk."

"I'm going to want to have one of my Healers look you over," Amelia said as she examined the scar, "to make sure that there are no long term problems resulting from this." And to document it and gather intelligence on what else had happened to this poor boy.

"But Madame Pomfrey . . ."

"Is very good at what she does," Amelia interrupted, "but she is not a specialist in toxicology." Or forensics, or any number of disciplines that she was going to wheel this boy in front of.

"Oh . . . I guess that's alright then," Harry said, mollified that his Healer wasn't being disparaged.

"Wonderful. Now why don't you tell me about first year," Amelia suggested, "who tried to kill you then?"

"Voldemort was possessing my Defense Professor," Harry said, "well . . . maybe. He was living in the back of the Professor's head, well . . . not exactly living but . . ."

"Explain the words, living in the back of the Professor's head."

"Uh . . . he was just sorta . . . there."

"We can go into detail later," Amelia said gently, "why don't we get back to this year. Why do you think someone is trying to kill you now?"

"Because they entered me into the contest," Harry said honestly, "better witches and wizards than I am have died in that bloody contest. I'll bet they're just waiting for a chance to take care of me in a way that lets them make it look like an accident."

"If you didn't enter yourself into the tournament, then why did you participate," Amelia asked with a puzzled frown.

"Dumbledore said I had to," Harry replied, "or else I wouldn't have."

"That's absurd," Amelia said, her frown deepened, "you can't be entered into a magical contract without your consent."

"So I can quit then," Harry asked hopefully.

"Not anymore." Amelia dashed his hopes. "I would imagine that going through with the first task counts as consent."

"Oh." Harry's shoulders slumped.

"On the other hand it does allow me to make this offer without feeling too much guilt," Amelia continued. "How would you like to get a bit of Auror training Harry?"

"What?"

"Auror training," Amelia repeated, "either from me or from one of my people, depending on everyone's schedules."

"Can the girls do it too," Harry asked hopefully. "I'm not sure I want to do it if I can't have my friends with me."

"I'll see what I can arrange," Amelia demurred. She was quite pleased by the Hufflepuffish attitude the boy was showing. "Now why don't we get back to the girls."

"Okay Amelia," Harry agreed.

The concerned girls mobbed Harry when he walked into the room. After assuring themselves that he hadn't been damaged or distressed in anyway, they turned and directed fierce glares at Madame Bones.

"I just wanted to get to know the boy that's dating my friend's daughter," Amelia said with upraised hands, "nothing more." She smiled widely at the group. "Before we start our lessons, I'd like to take you all to St. Mungos to get the Healers to sign off on you."

"Why do we need to do that Aunt Amelia," Susan asked innocently.

"You should always consult a Healer before starting a strenuous new activity," Amelia lectured. Not to mention the fact that she wanted to assure herself that the girls hadn't had as many 'adventures' as Harry. "It's mostly for old women like me, but we don't want to take any chances."

"Is dancing really that strenuous," Harry asked, having never thought about it before.

"It is if you do it right," Amelia replied with a grin, causing the girls to giggle and Harry to scratch his chin in confusion.

IIIIIIIIII

The Healers were not pleased by their initial examination of Harry Potter, declaring that he should have been hospitalized for any number of ailments.

"Summon the Hogwarts School Nurse," the Chief Healer ordered, "I want to have a word with her." And she had better have the right answers or I'll revoke her bloody license, he added to himself.

"At once sir," one of the underlings agreed.

"It's that bad then," Amelia asked softly.

"Scurvy," the Chief Healer growled, "the poor boy has suffered multiple bouts of scurvy and rickets. That's something you never see these days, it's unheard of."

"I see."

The Chief Healer lit into Madame Pomfrey the second she walked through the door. He didn't let her get a word in as he dressed her down, treating her as if she were a first year intern that had just made a life ending mistake.

"Well," he growled, "what do you have to say for yourself?"

"What do I... of course Harry is in bad shape and that's because you lot aren't doing anything about it," Pomfrey snapped, "I do everything I can for the boy when he's in my care . . . more then I'm supposed to do, if we're going to disclose everything," she admitted, "you're the ones that aren't following my recommendations. I'm just a school Healer, but than, what do I know, I'm not a fancy St. Mungos professional!"

"Wait," Amelia said sharply, "what recommendations?"

"I've been referring him to St. Mungos every year that Harry has been at Hogwarts," Pomfrey said hotly, she turned to Amelia, "if they'd have followed my wishes then he'd have spent his entire summer under observation after his second year."

"I see." Amelia turned back to the St. Mungos Healers and raised her eyebrow.

"We've received no referrals for Harry Potter," the Chief Healer said quickly.

"So what," Poppy demanded, "it was a clerical error?"

"I don't know what it was," the Chief Healer admitted, "but you can be sure that I will get to the bottom of things."

"Good."

"It seems that I've jumped to conclusions," the Chief Healer said with a sour expression, "and that I have wronged you Madame Pomfrey."



"It's understandable," Poppy allowed, "it certainly does look like a case of gross negligence, doesn't it. I'm sure that I would have acted the same if I were in your shoes."

"Now that we've gotten that issue out of the way." The Chief Healer licked his lips. "Would you mind doing me a favor?"

"What is it?"

"Please join us while we attend young Harry Potter," the Chief Healer said, "as his primary Healer you may have insights that we lack."

"Plus he trusts you," Amelia interjected, "boy didn't like the idea of going to a Healer that wasn't you at all."

"Really." Poppy perked up at that pronouncement. "In that case, I would be delighted to join you."

"Here is the chart we've worked up for him." One of the Healers handed it to the school nurse. "Do you have anything to add?"

"A couple things," the woman muttered as her eyes darted over the page, "my word."

"What is it?"

"I never noticed half these things," Poppy admitted in shame, "if I had . . . that poor boy."

"We've got better access to training and equipment here," the Chief Healer said gently.

"Still," Poppy protested, "missing some of these things was . . . was nothing short of criminal."

"So get some more training," the man offered, "you've got the summers off don't you? Come here, I can always use another pair of hands."

"Yes but . . . yes, thank you."

They walked into Harry's room and Poppy let her professional face slide into place to cover up the discomfort she felt at the boy's condition.

"Hello Madame Pomfrey," Harry said cheerfully.

"Hello Harry," she replied, "I've got some good news for you."

"What is it," He asked suspiciously, recognizing the evil glint in her eyes.

"We're going to be feeding you a number of disgusting potions," Poppy said, "isn't that grand?"

"No," Harry replied, mock pouting, as he really did appreciate the care and attention she gave him, "I don't think it is."

"You'll change your mind when you see how much better you feel after this is all done," Poppy retorted, "mark my words."

"Did you check out the girls too," Amelia whispered to the Chief Healer while the children were preoccupied.

"No we didn't."

"Do it," she ordered.

IIIIIIIIII

The Headmaster of Hogwarts was sitting in his office when a familiar face appeared in the flames of his fireplace.

"Ah Amelia," Dumbledore said with his trademarked smile, "how good to hear from you again."

"I just wanted to let you know that the children won't be back from their lessons tonight," Amelia said with a look of regret.

"Why is that?"

"Some people weren't as careful as they could have been," Amelia laughed, "so we made a little side trip to have a Healer see everything to rights."

"Nothing serious I trust," Dumbledore said calmly.

"Nothing that required immediate attention," Amelia agreed, "though they did call in Madame Pomfrey since she knows the children and they trust her."

"Wonderful," Dumbledore cheered, "do try to get them back before classes on Monday."

"I'll try," Amelia promised, "but you know how Healers can be."

"Get a scratch and they think it's the end of the world," Dumbledore said in understanding, "well... do what you can anyway."

"I shall, goodnight Albus."

"Goodnight Amelia."

IIIIIIII

Harry wouldn't admit it, but he was more than a bit concerned at all the attention he was getting from the St. Mungos staff. Every time he tried to ask what was happening, they just brushed him off and poured another potion down his throat.

"Oh Harry," Hermione sobbed as she came into the room with the other three girls. She threw her arms around him and began sobbing into his shoulder, Hannah took the other side with Susan while Luna seemed to mold herself to Hermione's back.

Madame Pomfrey came in with Amelia a few minutes later and they both took in the scene with matching smirks.

"Am I going to die," Harry asked curiously. He regretted that his question seemed to push the girls into greater distress.

Amelia for her part, was more than a bit alarmed at how calmly the boy had asked the question. What kind of life had the poor child led if he could face the prospect of death so calmly.

"What," Poppy asked, "why would you think that?"

"Well." Harry tilted his head to indicate the crying girls. "What am I supposed to think?"

"You're not going to die Harry," Poppy assured the boy.

"What about all this then?" Harry again indicated the girls.

"I would guess that at least one of them was listening in when the Healers were going over their data," Amelia said dryly.

"Huh?"

"Poppy, could you explain please."

"Harry . . . you know how . . ." She sighed. "I'm not a full Healer, just a school nurse."

"You're a great Healer," Harry protested.

"Then if I'd have been a better Healer then I'd have noticed several signs of... of unpleasantness when I examined you," Poppy said with calm she did not feel.

"Like what?"

"Do you know what scurvy is Harry?"

"No." Harry's eyes shifted to Hermione, revealing to everyone just how much he relied on and trusted the young girl.

"It's a sickness that sailors used to get," Hermione spoke up, "it's caused when you don't get enough fresh fruits and vegetables. Right Madame Pomfrey?"

"Essentially correct Hermione," Madame Pomfrey said. "Harry, this sort of thing doesn't occur in developed nations. Not unless

someone's diet is . . . Harry we know several things about your upbringing, we can read it in your medical history."

"So . . ." Harry seemed to shrink.

The girls all tightened their hold on the boy.

"So, I would like very much to arrest whoever raised you," Amelia said gently, "and then throw them into the deepest pit I can find."

Harry didn't have a ready reply for that statement.

IIIIIIII

The Chief Healer walked up to Amelia with an uncomfortable look on his face.

"What is it?" She asked with growing dread.

"We have the girl's results," he replied. "Lovegood, Abbot, and your niece have all been exposed to something."

"Explain something," Amelia growled.

"We're not sure," he admitted, "it's as if some idiot randomly mixed a dozen potions ingredients together and splattered the girls with small amounts of the resulting mush."

"Go on."

"We've caught it early enough so that it isn't going to cause them any problems," he assured the nervous woman.

"Good," she sighed, "and Hermione?"

"Ms. Granger isn't in as bad a shape as Mr. Potter," he said with a frown. "We'd like more time to do a deeper scan of course but . . ."

"Just give it to me," Amelia barked.

"There are long term effects from the time she spent petrified that Madame Pomfrey was unable to deal with," he replied, "this wouldn't

normally be a problem, but she also got exposed to something that turned her into some sort of feline. If I didn't know better, I'd say that the girl was trying to become an animagus."

"I see."

"I don't believe that she will suffer any negative long term effects," the Healer continued, "but it's too early to be sure."

"Thank you."

"Incidentally, she's and Harry are also suffering from the same malady that we found in the other three girls." He added.

|||||

It took an entire weekend of treatments before the Healers would consent to Harry's discharge from the hospital and nearly that long for Harry to give a firsthand account of his treatment at the hands of the Dursley family.

Upon hearing how normal they wished to be, Amelia managed to arrange a bit of extra payback . . . unofficially of course.

|||||

Scores of police had descended on the normal Surrey neighborhood. After dragging the Dursley family out in chains, detectives knocked on every door and talked to every person.

"So what's this about," Asked the owner of number six. "What'd they do?"

"Bad business there," the Detective said with a frown, "not permitted to go into details you understand..."

"Of course," he took his cue.

"Well, let's just say that I've never seen a more unnatural group of freaks . . . You wouldn't happen to have any information you could share about them would you?"

"Don't know," the man admitted, "will I be able to testify?"

"That would be fine," the Detective said, "just fine."

"Will the press be there?"

"I suspect that they'll be all over this one," the Detective agreed, "even if they somehow manage to get off . . . well, let's just say that there won't be a person in the country that doesn't know their faces and all about how abnormal they all are."

|||||

Poppy and Amelia watched in amusement as the four girls escorted Harry to Hogwarts.

They all seemed to think that Harry was made of glass, that he might break at any instant. He on the other hand didn't seem to know how to deal with all the attention, shifting from confusion to annoyance and back to confusion every couple of minutes.

He really wasn't used to all the physical contact the girls were subjecting him to and it showed. Unfortunately for Harry's nerves that just seemed to encourage them.

"I've arranged to have your lessons begin after classes today," Amelia said to the group, "just go to the hospital wing after classes."

"Mr. Potter will be waiting for you there," Poppy interjected.

"I will," Harry asked.

"I'm going to be keeping you under observation for at least the next week," Poppy said firmly, "and I'd like to take you to St. Mungos over the weekend for more tests."

"But . . ."

"Can we come with him," Hermione asked. "I'm sure that it would be absolutely horrid to be alone all weekend."

"I'll see what I can arrange," Amelia promised.

"Thank you Madame Bones," Hermione said sweetly. The other three quickly added their thanks.

|||||||

Amelia wouldn't say that she was comfortable in the muggle world, but decades of working in Magical Law Enforcement had impressed on her the need to be able to move through it without attracting notice.

Her car dropped her off in front of a large house with a well kept lawn. She walked to the front door and spent a few moments wondering where the knocker was before remembering that the button adjacent to the door caused a bell to chime.

"May I help you?" The woman who answered the door asked, she was a brunette with hair that could have passed for silk.

"Mrs. Granger, I presume."

"Yes, and you are . . ."

"Amelia Bones," she introduced herself, "Director of Magical Law Enforcement for the United Kingdom."

"Is there something wrong with Hermione?" The woman asked, the expression on her face was frozen.

"She's in fairly good health," Amelia assured the woman, "may I come in?"

"Please do," Mrs. Granger waved her in, "what's this all about then?"

"I was hoping that you would be willing to tell me why you haven't taken your daughter into St. Mungos for her yearly physicals," Amelia said calmly.

"We take her to our GP every summer," Hermione's mother said cautiously.

"So you haven't ever taken her to any Magical Healers?"



"The school nurse looked over her when we registered her for Hogwarts," she replied, "please tell me what this is all about."

"There are a few things that I think you should be aware of," Amelia sighed.

"Like what," Hermione's mother felt faint.

"There have been several . . ." She pursed her lips. "Let's call them accidents in her Potions class."

"What kind of accidents?"

"Exposure to dangerous substances," Amelia said unhappily.

"Please don't tell me they were Tetragenic," Hermione's mother begged, "or that they'll affect Hermione's long term health."

"I'm afraid that I'm not familiar with that term," Amelia admitted, "and we believe that we've caught things early enough so that Hermione's health will not be affected."

"Tetragenic means that it could or would cause problems for any children she has," Mrs. Granger explained.

"I . . . I don't know," Amelia said uncomfortably.

"You don't bloody know," she screamed, "why in the bloody hell didn't you check?"

"I'm not a Healer," Amelia snapped, "and my niece Susan is one of the girls that we know were exposed. For all I bloody know, the entire class has the same problem. I came here myself because I thought you'd want to hear it from a fellow parent, but if you . . ."

"Wait," Hermione's mother said, "I'm sorry. I thought you were a bureaucrat that was sent here to . . . never mind, would you please escort me to the place that we can get some answers."

"I would consider it an honor," Amelia replied, "please take my hand."

"One second." She pulled out a pen and jotted down a quick note. "I don't want my husband to worry about where I am." She took the other woman's hand. "Let's go."

|||||

The jaw of every member of Hogwarts' staff dropped in shock as Poppy gave her ultimatum. They just couldn't force themselves to believe that the woman was serious, or that she had the power to back up her demands.

"I am afraid that we can not close the school for a week," Dumbledore said with a smile, "I'm sorry Poppy but it's just not possible."

"You don't have a choice Albus," Poppy replied, "as this is a medical issue . . ."

"Preposterous," Snape sneered, "there's nothing wrong with the little malingerers."

"Is that your professional opinion?" Poppy asked sarcastically.

"I . . ."

"There's no need for that," Dumbledore said quickly. "And Poppy, while it's true that you have the power to shut down the school in theory . . ."

"In practice I have the Chief Healer for St. Mungos backing me up," she interrupted, "and I think that closes the subject."

"Surely this isn't necessary," Dumbledore tried another track, "the students all seem so healthy."

"Looks can be deceiving," Poppy sighed, "and we cannot delay when the lives and health of our students are at stake."

"Agreed," Minerva spoke up.

"But what if there's nothing wrong?" Albus asked. "What do we tell the parents and the press?"

"We tell them that we're being careful," Minerva replied. "That we would much rather check a hundred times and find nothing than to miss something."

"But to do it now," Albus protested, "when we're engaged in the Triwizard and under the eyes of the world."

"You'd risk our children to avoid losing a bit of prestige," Minerva hissed, "listen to yourself Albus."

"Yes of course," Albus said contritely, "thank you Minerva. When can we do this Poppy?"

"A team from St. Mungos is already on the way," she replied calmly.

"But . . ."

IIIIIIIIII

Harry watched as the Healers he'd met at St. Mungos took over the school Hospital Wing and began assembling an array of mysterious equipment.

"Sorry to disturb you Harry," the Chief Healer said with a grin, "but you know how it is."

"Yes sir," Harry agreed.

"Would you like to stay here, or would you prefer to go some place a bit more private."

"I'll go somewhere else," Harry said quickly.

"Dorothy," he called out.

"Yes sir," she asked.

"Escort Mr. Potter here to one of the empty rooms and keep him company until I send someone for you," he ordered.

"Yes sir," she agreed.

"See if you can find his friends," he added.

"I don't need a minder," Harry protested.

"Harry . . . has anyone told you why we're here?"

"No sir."

"We detected . . . problems when we scanned you and your friends."

"Are they going to be okay?" Harry asked in concern.

"We're not sure," the Healer said honestly, "and that is why I want you to . . ."

"Have a minder," Harry sighed.

"Yes, I'm afraid so."

"But you'll do everything you can to make sure that my friends . . ."

"Everything in my power," he agreed.

"Alright," Harry agreed reluctantly.

"Harry," Dorothy got down to look him in the eye, "I promise that I'll do my best to stay out of your way."

"You don't have to do anything special," Harry sighed.

"Come on," she said, "let's go find your friends."

They walked out of the Hospital Wing and found the four girls hovering nervously outside the door. Each of the girls had a sick expression on their face which transformed into one of relief when they saw Harry.

"What's this all about?" Hermione asked, acting as the group's spokeswoman.

"We found some things when we looked at your test results," Dorothy said gently, "so we're checking the other students."

"Is it bad?" Susan asked.

"We're not sure what it is," Dorothy said honestly, "that's why we're checking everyone."

"Oh."

"I'm sure everything will be fine," she tried to comfort the children, "we just need to gather as much information as we can before deciding on a course of action." She bit her lip nervously, she really wished the Chief Healer had given the job to one of the Pediatric Healers. "Let's go find some place where we can get a bit of privacy."

After a few minutes of wandering the halls, they soon settled on what appeared to be an old teacher's lounge. They chatted for a few more minutes until Hermione couldn't contain herself any longer.

"Could you teach us some healing spells," Hermione requested with sparkeling eyes. Unlike Harry, when she looked at the young healer, she didn't see a minder. What she saw as a potential source of instruction.

IIIIIIII

One at a time, the four Heads of House led their charges down to the Hospital Wing where the Healers subjected them all to a battery of tests.

Gryffindor was the last house to get tested and by the time Minerva got in to check things out, the grim looks on the faces of St. Mungos' staff told her all she needed to know.

"How bad," Minerva asked. Fear gripped her heart as the man pondered her question.

"Three girls and eight boys were rendered sterile," the Chief Healer said sadly, "external organs seemed to be more vulnerable."

"What about the Tet . . . what Mrs. Granger asked about?"

"We're not sure," the Chief Healer admitted, "god it's going to be years before we clean up this mess."

"Can the damage be repaired?"

"I don't know," he admitted, "no one has ever seen something like this on such a large scale before. The worst hit are the sixth and seventh years and the students from Slytherin House. We . . . I promise that we shall do everything we can, but I can't promise anything."

"I understand," Minerva said, "how could this have happened?"

"I believe that you should direct that question to Madame Bones," he said delicately.

IIIIIIII

Snape was sitting in his office cursing the Healers and everything Potter. How dare they interrupt his classes, how dare they demand to look at his Slytherins. Like most petty bullies, he deeply resented anyone that held power over him. The Headmaster didn't count, old fool was easy enough to manipulate into doing just about anything in the name of the 'greater good.'

"This is all Pomfrey's fault," Snape snarled to himself. He was going to have to find a way to even the score with her, perhaps he could do a bit of creative brewing the next time he was called upon to replenish the Hospital Wing's potion stores. He looked up in annoyance when there was a sharp rap on the door. "Not now," he said sharply.

The door burst off its hinges to admit Amelia Bones and several large Aurors.

"Severus Snape," she said, "I would like a word with you."

"Talk to the Headmaster," Snape screamed as they twisted his arms behind his back and slammed him into the floor. "You can't do this, the Headmaster won't allow you . . ."

“Shut up.” Amelia punctuated her order with a kick to the stomach. “Albus Bloody Dumbledore has nothing to do with this conversation. It's just you, and me.”

|||||

Senior Auror Chalmhurst did not look like an Auror, if anything she looked like a matronly old grandmother. It was an effect that she'd spent years cultivating. Many a suspect had been sent to Azkaban after confiding in the old woman, she always enjoyed the looks on their face when they saw her testify. This was different, she always hated interviewing children, always hated hearing the poor little darlings talk about what had been done to them.

The old woman paused in front of the door and schooled her features into what many called her 'granny look' before knocking on the door.

“What is it,” Dorothy asked as she opened the door. The young healer's hand drifted towards her wand, she did not know this woman.

“I'm just here to have a little chat with the children dearie,” Auror Chalmhurst said in a kindly voice. She flashed her badge, holding it so that only the Healer would see it. “If that's alright.”

“Come in,” Dorothy agreed.

Chalmhurst noted with approval the way the other woman refused to show her back, the Healer may not have known how to handle herself but she showed a properly paranoid outlook.

“I've been hearing a lot about your Potions Classes,” Chalmhurst began, “and I wanted to get the story from you Harry.”

“Alright,” Harry said.

“I've been told that Professor Snape.” How it galled to use such a polite term. “Treated you differently then the other students,” she began slowly, “could you tell me if that's true.”

“Um . . .” Harry looked down at his feet.

"Professor Snape is always rude to Harry," Hermione said with a frown.

"He's never fair with Gryffindors," Hannah added, "but it's worse with Harry."

"Neville has it worse than I do," Harry muttered, "it's not so bad. I can take it."

"Neville . . ." Chalmhurst's eyes widened in shock. "Longbottom?"

"Yes ma'am."

"Oh my." Augusta would be furious to find out that her grandson was being persecuted. "Harry, why don't you just take a deep breath and tell me in your own words about some of your experiences in Potions class."

"I . . ."

"Please," the old woman asked earnestly, "it's to help us improve the school's educational standards."

Hermione's eyes lit up and to the amusement of the Healer and the Auror, the young girl leaned over to whisper something into Harry's ear.

IIIIIIIIII

Lucius strolled into Hogwarts with his chin in the air, his every move making it clear that he considered himself to be as far above everyone else as they were above the scum in the lake.

"Amelia," Lucius purred, "what's this I hear about you arresting my, good friend Severus?"

"You may want to sit down Lucius," Amelia said gently, "where's Narcissa?"

"She couldn't make it," Lucius said calmly. He didn't like the way things were going at all.



"Lucius . . . I don't know how to tell you this but . . ."

"But what," Lucius asked sharply, "tell me."

"Your son Draco has been rendered sterile as a result of several Potions accidents," she told him, "I'm sorry."

"Can it be reversed?"

"We're not sure," Amelia replied, "the Healers are working on it."

"Tell them they can have whatever funds they require," Lucius said. He closed his eyes. "How did this happen?"

"It appears that your 'good friend' Severus neglected to teach standard reaction tables or lab safety," Amelia replied, "it also appears that he found it amusing to encourage his charges to throw strange things into incomplete potions being brewed by students from other houses."

"And this caused my son to become . . ." Lucius went white. "I want him dead."

"We haven't decided if we are going to ask for the kiss," Amelia said uncomfortably.

"You will ask for the kiss or my Barrister will have him out of your holding cell within the hour," Lucius growled, "while dementors are hard to come by, anyone can obtain lethifolds for the right price."

"Are you threatening me?"

"I am telling you that if you won't do your job, then I will."

"I see." Amelia relaxed slightly as she realized the threat wasn't to her or anyone under her command.

"How am I going to tell Narcissa?" Lucius seemed to collapse. "He's my only son, my only child. Does he know that . . ."

"Not yet," Amelia replied, "we'd like to wait until the Healers know more before telling any of the children."

"Thank you for telling me this Personally Amelia," Lucius said with as much calm as he could muster. He spent several minutes regaining his control while the Auror watched. "And please tell me if there is anything I can do to aid you in this matter."

"I will," Amelia promised.

"Now if you could direct me to my son . . ."

"He's in the hospital wing," Amelia said. Lucius left as the matriarch of the Longbottom family stormed in.

"What's happened to my grandson," Augusta demanded.

"Augusta," Amelia greeted the woman. She tried to think of a way to break the news gently, fearing that the news could kill the old woman. "Please, have a seat."

|||||

Dorothy called an early halt to the interview, noting that it was time for Harry to take his potions. Hermione elected to accompany Harry to the Hospital Wing while the other three girls elected to stay with the Auror, to give the woman their accounts of what passed for Potions classes at Hogwarts.

Hermione had always been fascinated by Hospital Wing and had always felt more than a bit guilty about the delight felt when she watched Harry suffer through one treatment or another.

"What's this potion for," Hermione demanded, the young girl was fascinated by the wide array of potions being poured down Harry's throat.

"It's to treat rickets," Madame Pomfrey said after a glance at the label.

"What's that," she asked, wanting to make sure what she'd read in her parents medical dictionary matched the magical world's definition.

"You get it when you don't have enough calcium in your diet," Madame Pomfrey replied, "or if you don't get enough sunlight."

"Oh." Hermione dimmed a little as she took in the implications. "What about this one?"

"That one treats scurvy, that's what you get if you don't eat enough fresh fruits or vegetables," she reminded the girl.

"Oh," Hermione said dully. The picture she'd formed of Harry's home life had never been good, but she'd never imagined. "Madame Pomfrey, are Harry's relatives going to go to jail?"

"I would be surprised if they don't," Poppy said gently.

"Good," Hermione said savagely, "I hope they stay there forever."

|||||

Narcissa's heart broke when she heard the news about her baby boy and she sobbed in Lucius's arms. Most outsiders believed that the Malfoys had a loveless marriage, figuring that money and status was all that held the relationship together. Most outsiders were wrong. While distant, the pair did sincerely care about each other and they were both devastated by what their son had suffered at the hands of Severus Snape, a man they'd both trusted.

"He's a dead man walking," Lucius promised, "there's no power on this earth that can protect him." It was the truth too, Albus Dumbledore liked to think that he pulled the strings but it was Lucius Malfoy that truly held the reins of power. "I've already given Fudge the orders."

"What if they can't cure Draco," Narcissa cried. "What then?"

"Then we shall cross that bridge when we come to it," Lucius said tightly.

"Hold me," she begged.

"Of course."

|||||

Augusta watched her grandson from afar, he was the last of the Longbottom family. It saddened her to think that a thousand years of history might come to an end thanks to the actions of one petty tyrant and the man that shielded him. Yes, she knew that while Snape was directly responsible for the misfortune that had befallen the children, it was Albus Dumbledore that had enabled the bastard to do it. A Longbottom never forgets, she promised herself, and a Slytherin never forgives. Regardless of what happened with Neville, Augusta promised herself that she would have her vengeance on the Headmaster and his lapdog . . . no matter what it took.

|||||||

Dumbledore plastered on his most charming smile as the Head of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement walked into his office.

"Amelia," he said cheerfully, "how good of you to join me."

"Albus," she said coldly, "you and I need to have a little conversation."

"Indeed we do," he agreed, "I'm most disappointed in you Amelia. You know that traditionally the Ministry stays out of Hogwarts business, the thing with Severus really should have been handled internally."

"Handled internally," she growled, "that bastard's spent years endangering children and ruining dreams on your watch and you want a chance to deal with it internally. Are you senile or just bloody stupid?"

"Amelia please," Dumbledore said condescendingly. He couldn't believe how the conversation was going, usually they just accepted his recommendations and went on their way.

"Shut up," Amelia growled, "and save your holier than thou attitude for someone who gives a damn."

"I'm telling you Amelia that . . ." Dumbledore was starting to lose his calm.

"No I'm telling you Dumbledore. This is how it's going to be. Snape goes to Azkaban, Harry moves in with me, You swear an oath not to meddle, interfere in the life of, nor manipulate Harry Potter in any way. that all your interactions with him AND all actions that affect him will ONLY be professional and ONLY to do with school related matters in your role as headmaster, or I swear by Merlin, you will have your titles stripped, your reputation shattered and you will find yourself locked into the deepest pit of the worst part of Azkaban, with a mutant career dog rapist's dick deep in your colon before the night is out! Do I make myself clear?"

"Crystal," Dumbledore said sourly.

"Wonderful." Amelia's smile returned. "In that case, that will be all."

"Wonderful."

"And Albus." She paused at the door. "Don't leave the country or make any travel plans."

IIIIIIIIII

Lucius looked over the School Governors and mentally tallied the votes he could command, still a few short to go after Dumbledore but more than enough to end the career of an incompetent Potions Professor.

"Thank you all for coming on such short notice," Lucius said with uncharacteristic humility, "I trust that you've all heard of the Potions situation?" He looked over their faces and was unsurprised to see that many of the sheep had no clue what he was talking about. "It is because of that situation that I would like to put forth a vote to dismiss the current Potions Master with cause."

"A point if I may," Augusta said sharply.

"Madam." Lucius nodded, a spike of anxiety shot through his heart as he considered that the woman might oppose the measure out of spite. Lucius belatedly realized that he should have had a proxy introduce the motion.

"I believe that your heart is in the right place," the woman said, "but that you are not going far enough."

"What do you mean?" Lucius asked.

"I believe that there is a rot in Hogwarts," Augusta began, "and I think that the responsibility for that lies squarely on us, the Board. It is our responsibility to monitor the school and to ensure that every student has a safe environment to learn and prosper . . . I fear that we have been shirking our duties." She sighed. "I would like to second Mister Malfoy's motion to dismiss Severus Snape and I would like to make a friendly amendment to also dismiss the current Headmaster. It was under his watch that the Potions Master was permitted to abuse and endanger our students, the consequences fall on his shoulders."

"Agreed," Lucius said. He felt faint, who would have guessed that Augusta Longbottom of all people would be his ally in this matter. "With thanks."

The rest of the Board quickly fell in line, none of Lucius's pets would dare go against him and none of the rest had the intestinal fortitude to go up against the united block. Lucius waved Augusta to the side as the meeting came to a close.

"What is it?" She asked coldly.

"I believe that the two of us have something in common," Lucius said calmly, "and I believe that I have a charity that you may wish to become involved in."

"What kind of charity?"

"The kind that provides funding to St. Mungos," Lucius said, "to establish a research department to help the victims of this disaster."

"Muggleborn included?"

"All of them," Lucius replied. He was more than willing to cast aside ideals that might get in the way of public support.

"Who were you thinking of appointing to run this?"

"Amelia Bones," Lucius replied, "or the Chief Healer."

"Not yourself?"

"No." This was also one cause that he wasn't going to allow Fudge to turn into a source of revenue.

"We may be able to do business Lucius," Augusta allowed. Her hatred of Dumbledore and Snape eclipsing her distaste for Lucius Malfoy, Bellatrix's brother in law.

|||||||

Minerva's hands shook as she reread her appointment to Headmistress. If she were to be honest with herself, she didn't expect to ever become the Headmistress of Hogwarts. She'd always assumed that Albus would hold the position until his death and the old man had seemed so spry, so eternal, that she she'd also assumed that the former Headmaster would outlive her.

The new Headmistress walked down to her new office to find her predecessor packing his things.

"Minerva," he said, "congratulations. "

"Albus I . . . I'm sorry but I've been directed to expel you from the school," she said reluctantly. She understood why the old man had been dismissed after the business with Snape, but she wasn't at all sure she approved of how they were going about it. "You are not permitted to set foot on school grounds, you are not permitted to pack up your things, and you are not permitted to have any contact with the students."

"It seems that bad things come in threes," he sighed, "how will I get my belongings if I'm not permitted to pack them myself?"

"Madame Bones is sending an evidence team to do it," Minerva replied.

"I see . . . fear not Minerva, I'm sure that this is nothing more than a temporary setback."

"You can't possibly believe that Albus," Minerva said, "not after everything that's come to light."

"I'm sure that . . ."

"How could you allow that man to endanger our children like that?"

Minerva demanded suddenly. "Damn it Albus, they've been looking over our alumni starting from the time that Severus started teaching and do you know what they discovered?"

"What," Dumbledore asked reluctantly.

"They discovered that the number of Potions NEWTs went down some fifty five percent while the number of health issues went up some two hundred," Minerva replied, "that man is responsible for an entire generation of . . . don't you even care about what he's done?"

"I did what I thought was best at the time," he replied. It sounded mechanical, rehearsed. "No doubt I would have acted differently if I had a chance."

"Goodbye Albus."

"Farewell Minerva."

IIIIIIIIII

Snape sat in his cell nursing his bruises with a scowl on his face. He was convinced that Albus was securing his release and he vowed that he would get even with the people responsible for his current misfortune, especially that Bones bitch. While the Director was out of his reach, she did have a niece currently attending Hogwarts. Severus smiled in anticipation as he thought about what he was going to do to the little piece of trash, she would pay . . . they would all pay.

An auto dictation quill merrily scribbled down his every angry mutter, as one of the aurors had copied the idea from observing the muggle authorities.



|||||

Amelia's eyebrows rose when the head of her evidence collection unit walked into her office with a large box in his hands.

"What's all that?" She asked mildly.

"Near as we can tell, it's all possessions of the Potter family." He carefully put the box on her desk. "Got wands belonging to Lily and James Potter along with a few other personal items."

"You've finished going through Dumbledore's office," Amelia said in understanding.

"No," he said quickly, "it'll take a few more weeks before we've sifted through everything. We just thought that Potter would want his things."

"I'll return them today," Amelia promised, "keep an eye out for anything else that might belong to other people."

"We're putting everything suspicious aside," he replied. "The lads just wanted . . . well, we figured . . ."

"Starstruck?"

"Younger half of my crew are, the older half figure that the poor kid's suffered enough."

"Got it."

|||||

Minerva was teaching a group of second years when she saw one of her Gryffindor Prefects hovering at the door. She waved the girl in and took the note in the girl's hands.

"It's from Madame Bones," the girl said nervously, "she told me to bring it to you even though you were in class."

"You did the right thing," Minerva assured the girl. She glanced over the note. "Go get Mister Potter, I believe that he's in Defense at the

moment.” Oh what a chore it had been to talk Poppy into allowing the boy to attend classes with the other students. “Have him meet Madame Bones in the Great Hall.”

“Yes Professor,” the girl agreed quickly.

“Wait.” Minerva stopped the girl before she could leave. “Have Misses Granger, Lovegood, Bones, and Abbot join him.”

“Yes Professor,” the girl said.

“That will be all,” Minerva said. She had to suppress a frown as the girl left the room. She wasn't sure what this was about but thought it best that the poor boy had as much support as possible.

IIIIIIII

Amelia took a breath as the Prefect she'd commandeered earlier returned with five students in tow. She hadn't asked for the others but Amelia decided that any opportunity to spend time with her niece was worth having.

“I suppose you're wondering why I called you here Harry,” Amelia greeted the boy.

“I am,” Harry agreed.

“While going through the things in the Headmaster's office, we discovered several items that belonged to your parents.”

“Oh.” Harry looked at his feet, wishing that he could be shocked by this latest betrayal.

“Here.” She handed the boy the box. “This is what we've found so far.”

“Has he said why he did it?” Harry asked.

“I haven't talked to him yet,” Amelia admitted, “I wanted to get these things to you first.”

"Thank you," Harry said dully. He put the box down on the table and began going through the contents.

While Harry went through the box with three of the girls, Susan walked up to her Aunt with a hopeful look on her face.

"Can I talk to you for a minute Aunty," Susan asked softly.

"What is it?" Amelia asked after she'd led her niece away from the rest of the group.

"Luna needs to talk to someone about some things," Susan said vaguely, "and I couldn't think of anyone else that could do it."

"What sort of things?"

"The sort that you'd want to talk to your mum about," Susan replied, "or your Aunt if you don't have a mum."

"Alright," Amelia sighed. She walked over to the group and tapped Luna on the shoulder. "Would you mind attending me for a few minutes Ms. Lovegood?"

"Of course Madame Bones," Luna said shyly.

"Luna," she said warmly, "call me Amelia."

IIIIIIIIII

Lucius glared at the man behind the desk with barely concealed contempt. People often wondered why Fudge was the Minister, wondered why the patriarch of the Malfoy family didn't just take the position himself. If he deigned to answer, Lucius would have sneered and explained that Fudge was a cut out, a patsy to take the fall if something were to go wrong. That was the mistake he'd made in his younger days, age had matured him and taught him the difference between the direct sort of thing he'd relished in his youth and the real power he had achieved. It was funny, he'd spent years supporting Voldemort's unsuccessful bid to take over the magical portion of the United Kingdom when a few well placed bribes could have handed them the whole thing in an afternoon.

"Do you understand," Lucius asked harshly.

"Yes," Fudge agreed, "I understand what I'm to do."

"Excellent."

|||||||

Amelia's first stop after returning Harry's things was the Hogshead pub where Albus was staying. The former Headmaster could have gone back to his old home but he'd have been happy to explain that he wanted to stay close to Hogwarts so he'd be on hand when everyone came back to their senses.

"Just what in the hell do you think you were playing at?" Amelia demanded as she stormed into his room. "We found things that belonged to James and Lily Potter in your office."

"I was hoping to divine the protection charm that Lily cast on Harry," Dumbledore said in a silky voice, "just think of the benefit if we could find a way to make it work for everything."

"And the rest?" She spat.

"I was just holding the items for Harry until he got older," Dumbledore explained, "I just don't think he's responsible enough to have everything yet."

"Young Mr. Potter doesn't agree."

"Yes, well . . ."

"Neither do I," Amelia interrupted, "you're lucky I'm not charging you with theft. Is there anything else that you've decided to 'hold' for anyone else?"

"A few things," Dumbledore admitted.

"Make a list," she growled, "so I can see that everything is returned."

"Amelia please."

"You can do it here, or in lock up. I expect it on my desk within twenty four hours. Anything you leave off of the list, the evidence team will report as theft and concealment of stolen property."

|||||

Minerva's gaze swept over the other two Headmasters as she took her seat and a spike of fear shot through her heart until she ruthlessly suppressed it.

"Thank you both for coming," Minerva started things off, "I was looking over the rules of the Triwizard when I noticed something."

"What is it?" Maxime asked.

"The Headmasters or Headmistresses of each competing school must agree on each event," Minerva replied.

"And we all have," Igor said abruptly, "what's the problem?"

"Ogwarts 'as already agreed," Maxime agreed reluctantly, "it matters not that you did not 'old the 'eadmistress position at the time."

"Of course," Minerva said quickly, "this isn't about Hogwarts."

"Well," Igor prompted. He was interested to see what the witch's point was.

"We have a fourth school in the tournament," Minerva explained, "and the Headmaster of the fourth school has not agreed to anything."

"Fourth . . . Mr. Potter," Maxime said in understanding, "but is he not a student of 'ogwarts?"

"According to the rules, each school may nominate one student."

"Is it possible?" Igor said thoughtfully.

"Will we 'ave to redo the first task?" Maxime asked.

"I think that will not be necessary so long as we are able to get the Headmistress of the fourth school to agree that it will be the first task," Minerva said with a smile.

"What Headmistress?" Igor had not missed the look on Minerva's face.

"Were either of you aware that Mr. Potter has been receiving extra lessons?" Minerva asked with a smile. "Along with a few girls, all arranged by the Director of Magical Law Enforcement."

|||||||

Amelia returned to her office to find the new Head of Slytherin House waiting outside her door. Amelia's lips pursed as she tried to remember the woman's name.

"Professor . . . ah . . ." Amelia stumbled.

"Sinistra," the woman introduced herself, "I don't believe we've been introduced."

"A pleasure to meet you," Amelia said pleasantly, "what can I do for you Professor?"

"I was hoping that you would be willing to lend me your evidence team," Sinistra replied.

"Oh."

"My new position." A look of distaste appeared on her face. "As Head of Slytherin House has given me several new responsibilities," she explained, "among them is keeping contraband out of my House Dorms and unlike Snape, I take my responsibilities seriously."

"Of course," Amalia agreed, "I'll have them send down a team. Was there anything else?"

"Not for me," Sinistra replied, "but I believe that Minerva is anxious to have a word with you."

"Please tell Minerva that I will be over as soon as I get some paperwork filed."

"I will Director Bones," the woman agreed, "good day."

"Good day."

|||||

Luna was waiting when Harry and Hermione got out of their last class of the day. With a smile, she appropriated Hermione's hand.

"Hello Luna," Hermione said, "how was your day?"

"It was quite the same as it always is," Luna said after a moment of intense thought, "how was yours?"

"Very well," Hermione said.

"Hello Luna," Harry said.

"Hello Harry," Luna said, "did your day go well as well?"

"Yes it did," Harry agreed, "should we go find Susan and Hannah?"

"But we don't have lessons today," Hermione said with a frown.

"So."

"Right," Hermione agreed, "coming Luna?"

"Of course."

|||||

Amelia arrived at Hogwarts and was immediately ushered into a meeting with the other three Headmasters. They explained the situation and settled down to hear her thoughts on the matter.

"I agree to the first contest," Amelia said formally. "Since I was not able to witness the performance of any of the contestants, I do not see how I can fairly score them so I award full points to all four of

them. I also have no objections to the third task, there are a few details that I'd like to address but that can be saved for another time. As for the second task . . .”

“What about it?”

“I don't like this second task at all,” Amelia said with a frown, “and I cannot agree to it.”

“What don't you like about it?” Maxime asked.

“The fact that it pulls in outsiders for one,” Amelia replied, “and . . .”

“The fact that your niece or one of her friends will likely be the hostage for two,” Minerva said with a smirk.

“That is a concern,” Amelia admitted.

“But the point is to encourage the competitors to go all out,” Igor said with a frown, “Dumbledore agreed that . . .” He trailed off with a look of distaste on his face. “Never mind, I withdraw my objections.”

“What do you suggest for an alternate second task?” Minerva asked.

“And what should we tell the children about the change?” Maxime added.

“I would suggest a dueling tournament,” Amelia replied, “each contestant duels every other contestant and we add up the points at the end. As for what to tell the children, well . . . how about we try telling them the truth.”

“Agreed,” Maxime sighed.

“I have no objections,” Igor offered.

“Neither do I,” Minerva said, “I would like to suggest that our Charms Professor stand in as the Hogwarts' Judge.”

“The little man?” Maxime asked.



"That little man has four gold medals in dueling," Igor said with a laugh, "and he coached the British team into several more. Not to mention what he's won outside the Olympics."

"Oh," Maxime said in shock, "then I would also like to nominate someone to take my place. Please allow me time to consider my choices."

"I'll have my Dueling Master come over for it," Igor said calmly. He turned to Minerva with a smile. "She's the woman that cost your Professor his fifth gold."

"And it will be a pleasure to meet her," Minerva said with a good natured smile.

"I'll see if the Auror Academy's Dueling Master is available," Amelia said to the group, "if he isn't then I will either get one of the under instructors or I will stand in myself."

"Excellent," Minerva cheered, "is there any other business we need to adress?"

"Not in my role of Harry's Headmistress," Amelia said, "but I do have a request for you as the Head of the Department of Law Enforcement."

"What is it?"

"I was hoping to get a chance to go through the Hogwarts vaults," Amelia replied, "who knows what Dumbledore might have hidden in them."

"Of course," Minerva agreed.

IIIIIIII

Hermione surprised the attending Healers when she came into the hospital wing and made a bee line towards the Chief Healer rather than Harry's bed as was usual.

"What can I do for you Ms. Granger?" The man asked kindly.

"I heard about the sterility," Hermione said with a subdued look on her face.

"We were hoping to keep that quiet for a bit longer," he said with a wince, "rest assured that Mr. Potter is not one of those affected."

"Oh," Hermione sighed in relief, "that's wonderful. But it's not what I wanted to ask you about."

"What did you want to ask me about?"

"I just . . ."

"Yes?"

"Are we talking about complete sterility or just a low enough sperm count to make having children a near miracle," the muggle born girl asked curiously, reminded of how her parents had to go to a specialist to have her.

|||||

Harry grinned as he and Hannah twirled around the dance floor. He'd have never imagined that dancing could be so much fun, not a spot on Quidditch of course, but it wasn't like he could be on a broom all the time.

"Mind if I cut in?" Susan asked as she took Hannah's spot.

"Not at all," Hannah said with a grin, "enjoy yourselves."

"Are you?" Susan said suddenly.

"Am I what?"

"Enjoying yourself," Susan giggled, "a lot, I hope."

"I think so," Harry said thoughtfully, "I'm not really sure."

"Huh?"

"I don't have much to compare it to," Harry tried to explain, "nothing except Quidditch."

"Aunty Amelia says that the Healers think they might have found a way to reverse the damage caused in Potions Class," Susan said suddenly.

"That's great," Harry cheered.

"They won't be able to do it for a few years," Susan continued, "but it's a start."

"Guess you can do a lot when you have that much backing," Harry said thoughtfully.

"Several wealthy families were affected," Susan pointed out.

"Yes I . . ." Harry felt a tap on his shoulder.

"Mind if I cut in?" Hermione asked.

"Not at all," Harry agreed. He moved aside so that Hermione could take his former position. "I needed a break anyway."

Harry moved over towards the corner where the other two girls had congregated when he heard a snippet of conversation.

"Still don't understand why Bones went with Hermione and Looney," Ron grumbled, "the other two aren't such a big loss but Bones has a great pair of Hufflepuffies."

"Don't talk about them like that," Harry growled. Friendship or no, Harry was not going to stand by while Ron disparaged the girls.

"I'll say whatever I want to about those freaks," Ron shouted back. It wasn't the correct word to use around Harry. In fact it was possibly the single worst word to use around Harry Potter, especially when describing one or more of his friends.

With one punch, Harry's friendship with Ron shattered along with the Cartilage in the red head's nose.

AN: Hermione and Luna don't necessarily have a romantic relationship, I knew several girls that went to dances in groups or pairs. With that in mind, it could lend itself to a pairing if someone wanted to write it that way. Me, I just wanted to write a lonely Luna fic and it grew from there. Some polish by dogbertcarroll, neil.reynolds, and Finbar. Title by Fenris.

Mini Omake by Finbar

"Damnit Aunty" Susan was red faced with anger and pride. "We've tried everything! How many other 15 year old boys would decline a threesome because it wasn't proper!"

Omake by davidiusbrown

Later, at Hermione's own Saint Mungo's checkup...

Miss Granger, you appear to be in good health, but you have an unnaturally high level of tachyon particles."

"Tachyon particles, Healer Brackett? That's muggle physics."

"While many in our world ignore the brilliant contributions of muggles, we at Saint Mungos do not. We know what the word stat means."

"Well you should, stat is just a medical abbreviation for the Latin statim, which means immediately."

"You know your languages. We even have an MRI here at Saint Mungos. I'll show it to you later if you want, but tell me, have you been doing any time travel lately?"

"Well I wasn't supposed to tell anyone."

"I'm your healer. You can tell me anything without fear of legal repercussion. It's part of our code of ethics, which is recognized by the Wizengamot."

"I was given a time turner last year so that I could attend extra classes. Headmaster Dumbledore gave it to me."

"BLOODY HELL! Is he mad? If this was a natural infusion, you wouldn't be in much danger. That imbecile! I'm admitting you now. We need to remove these excess tachyons from your body stat, or you could become sterile, grow cancerous tumors, or just suddenly drop dead."

"Drop dead?"

"Drop dead. With the massive tachyon energy in your system, subatomic particles within your body could suddenly decide they needed to be elsewhere, such as on the other side of the room, or the universe. Your very molecules will tear themselves apart. It's only a matter of time. We better get you to the MRI to check for tumors. NURSE McCALL! I need you to get Joe Early and Mike Morton. We've got an Emergency! on our hands."

Fortunately, Saint Mungos recently accepted a donation of the Nargle livers necessary to brew the potion to save Hermione's life.

David Brown

Anyone with any real knowledge of physics could probably suggest a better subatomic particle/wave/whatever. I do favor the Higgs Boson, if only because I watched Lex long ago.

Another by davidiusbrown

"Are you abusing cats, Miss Granger?"

"NO!"

"Then how can you explain the residuary cat DNA in your bloodstream? That usually only happens when wizards and witches sacrifice cats during dark rituals."

"I was making Polyjuice Potion, and, well, I put a cat hair into it by mistake. Madame Pomfrey fixed it. She said I was OK."

"You were fine, but all of the temporal destabilization that you went through last year affected your DNA. Remember what I said about molecules destroying themselves. Well, the human body is very

resilient. If some of your DNA goes missing, your cells will try to repair themselves. Sometimes this results in cancer. In your case, you are passing through the initial stages of a mutation."

"I'm going to be a cat?"

"No, we caught it early enough, but you will likely retain some feline characteristics. If you develop cat ears and a tail, we can remove them surgically, but, well, don't do that so quickly."

"Why?"

Healer Hackett whispered into her still presently normal left ear, "Some people find cat ears, well, sexually attractive."

"I AM NOT A FURRY!"

Later, while waiting for her next round of potions, Luna came in.

"How are you doing, Kitten?"

Disclaimer: DON'T EVER do what Ron does, he's a trained professional and you should NEVER EVER do it yourself.

Neutered

Ron was sitting in the Common Room pretending to look at Homework but actually contemplating what and how much he was going to have for lunch that day, when Hermione approached with a hopeful look on her face.

"Ron, could you do me a favor."

"What do you need Hermione?" Ron asked, rubbing his jaw and wondering when it would stop aching.

"When you go down to get your tooth pulled out, please take Crookshanks with you. He needs to get neutered, hopefully it'll calm him down and he'll learn what is and isn't acceptable behavior."

"Tooth pulled," Ron repeated dumbly.

"Don't play dumb," Hermione giggled, "you know as well as I do that teeth aren't supposed to turn black. You need to get it pulled now, before it gets any worse."

"Uh . . ." Ron procrastinated, recalling the twins telling him about how painful getting a tooth pulled was last hol, while trying to talk him out of his candy.

"Just do it," Hermione sighed, "please."

"Fine," Ron agreed, "but you owe me."

Ron picked up the large orange menace, Hermione called a pet, and wondered if the twins were joking when they'd said that you couldn't take pain potions when getting a tooth pulled.

Ron pondered all this while walking to the Hospital wing. On the way, he had the misfortune of running into Draco Malfoy and his two goons.

"And yet another troll for the weasel," Draco gloated, as he waved around a potions essay that Ron had thrown away and he'd retrieved.

Ron groaned and tried to control his temper. He knew Draco was just winding him up and Snape was lurking in some shadow waiting to deduct points. Finally getting a hold of himself, Ron stomped off ignoring the albino's taunts, wishing he'd been able to come up with a decent comeback and not just been thinking about removing some of Draco's teeth with a beater's bat.

Ron stormed into the Hospital wing and dropped the angry Crookshanks into a conveniently placed cage.

"What can I do for you Mr. Weasley," Madame Pomfrey asked.

"Hermione told me to come down here," Ron said glumly.

"And."

"And Crookshanks needs to get . . ." A sudden thought occurred to him, he knew that tooth extractions were painful and messy but he had no idea what 'neutered' meant, but Hermione had mentioned something about it improving temper and helping learning. Deciding to throw caution to the winds and to go with the devil he didn't know, Ron seized his chance. "A tooth pulled," Ron said happily, "and I need to get neutered."

"Are you sure?" Poppy asked with an odd look on her face.

"That's what Hermione told me to do," Ron said with a nod.

"And you're sure about this?"

"Uh huh."

"You didn't perhaps anger Ms. Granger again did . . ."

"It helps people with their temper problems and makes it easier to learn, right?," Ron growled.



"Well, I suppose it does," she replied, thinking about the distractions young men's hormones often were.

"Then that's what I want!"

"And me!" Draco burst in. He knew there was a reason that damn mudblood had been outscoring him in all the exams, she'd probably been neutered herself and didn't his mom once say something about his father being neutered and he knew his father was an intelligent man.

"If you insist," she agreed slowly, after the inevitable argument between the two had settled down.

Hermione arrived an hour later to pick up her cat and see how her friend was doing. Not to mention gloat a bit, she'd told Ron to improve his oral hygiene and to stop eating so many sweets.

"Here for your cat?" Madame Pomfrey asked.

"Yeah," Hermione agreed, "and to check on Ron. I know how painful that sort of thing can be."

"You know . . ." Poppy asked dumbly. No, she decided, it wasn't any of her business and Dumbledore had warned her that Harry and his friends may need some 'special' treatment while they were at school. "Well, come in then."

"How's Crookshanks?" Hermione asked. "Did he behave himself?"

"He's fine," Poppy said, "I checked his mouth and didn't see any teeth that needed to be removed."

"Of course not," Hermione agreed, "I'm very particular about his diet and oral hygiene."

"Then why did you ask me to extract one of his teeth?"

"I wanted Crookshanks to be neutered," Hermione explained, "he's been chasing Professor McGonagall around the castle. Ron's the one that needed a tooth removed and . . . oh god, he didn't."

IIIIIIII

Narcissa was going through the day's post when she came across a peculiar letter from the Hogwarts' school nurse.

"Oh my," Narcissa said in shock. That shock deepened when her spies began reporting in. "Oh my," she stammered. This was bad, this was really bad. It seemed that Draco had earned the ire of someone who could squash him like a bug, not to see to it that the minx didn't have a designs to remove the entire Malfoy family from the world. "Lucius."

"What is it Darling?" Lucius asked.

"It seems that young Draco has chosen to have his testicles removed," Narcissa purred, "possibly in some misguided attempt to be more like his father."

"I'd have thought he'd get his heart removed to be more like his mother."

"Eunuch."

"Bitch."

"Take a look at this," Narcissa said with a comely grin as she handed over her reports.

"She sacrificed a pawn to destroy our prince," Lucius said in an admiring tone, "and thus engineered the destruction of the Malfoy family in one fell stroke."

"We must do something before she has a chance to finish the job with us," Narcissa agreed, "and I did always want a daughter."

"So be it," Lucius agreed, "with her at the helm the Malfoy family will go on forever."

AN: Polish by dogbertcarroll

OMAKE by Tanaxanth

Ron was sitting in the Great Hall with Harry and Hermione, trying to talk and with his sore tooth.

"I tellin you Harry, that thing Pomfrey did has me feeling great," Ron said then winced as he took a bite of ice cream. "I feel like I can move easier and do anything."

Harry and Hermione both winced as she tried to think of a way to tell Ron what had happened, and what that meant.

Just as she was about to explain to Ron that neutering was not a good thing to the continuation of the Weasley line, Malfoy and his goons walked up.

"Potty, Mudblood, Weasel," he said as if he has said it before and had no one to write him new material. "What is this I hear about you getting something that gave you enhanced abilities?"

Ron's face grew red as he was about to attack the Slytherin, when Hermione's hand rested on his arm calming him down.

Harry then said, "It's ok Ron, Draco couldn't handle it anyway. He isn't brave enough to put himself on the line for these abilities."

Hermione did a doubletake as she listened to what Harry was saying, and added, "That's right... it takes a real man to be neutered."

Malfoy's cheeks grew red as he realized the Weasel had outdid him on something, then for the first time in his life he attempted to use the cunning that Slytherins are known for. "Oh I see... well thank you Granger for telling me the secret, soon I will be better than Pothead over there." He quickly stormed out of the Great Hall leaving Crabbe and Goyle looking at him then shuddering at the thought of being neutered. They quickly walked back to the Slytherin table to look for a new boss.

Ron looked at Harry with concern and asked, "Hey mate shouldn't you do that so you can make sure Malfoy doesn't get stronger than you."

Harry gulped a moment and suppressed a smile, "It's ok Ron, you can take care of him for me, after all haven't you always said you wished you were better than me in something? You can have this."

## The Rat Catcher's Guide to the Discworld

"There he is," one of Dudley's hangers on screamed.

"Get 'im," Dudley bellowed.

Like a pack of hounds with the scent of blood, every boy was determined not to give things up until after Dudley's freakish cousin learned that it was not okay to be different or small or slow or any one of a number of reasons that they'd think up after the 'fight' had come to an end.

Harry's legs burned as he ran from Dudley and his gang wishing with all his might that he could be somewhere else, anywhere else and in a flash, he was.

|||||

Stibbons barely knocked as he raced into the Archchancellor's offer.

"Sir? We were trying to split a thaum particle and the detectors recorded a level 5 burst of magical energy, that's over five hundred cubed decaprimes . . . more than you normally see in a century!" Depending on the century of course, some were more exciting than others after all.

Ridcully barely understood half of what Stibbons said on the best of days, but the young wizard had been going on about their latest experiment in the High Energy Magic department so much that he was sure that this pronouncement was of their success.

"Excellent! Good job! Share a glass of this rather excellent Klatchian port with us!"

But Stibbons shook his head. "Er, no, Archchancellor. It's not good. We didn't do the experiment, but the detectors picked up the burst of magic from somewhere outside the University. /Something/ happened that involved an awful lot of magic."

"Awful, you say?"

"I'm afraid so, Archchancellor. If I had to guess . . . we haven't gone over all the data yet, and Hex is being a bit recalcitrant tonight; somehow an aardvark got into the ant hill earlier today and his processing power is way down, and I'd almost say he's pouting. I've never see him like this . . ."

"Your guess?" The Archchancellor was used to having to get his professors back on subject and exceeding good at ignoring most of what they said anyway.

"Guess? Oh, right. It's just a guess, you know. But its the same sort of magical burst we would expect to see if something broke through from the Dungeon Dimensions."

"Ah, bad stuff in those Dungeon Dimensions," the Lecturer in Recent Runes commented. "I remember one tentacled horror, this was before your day, Stibbons, that, well, it's kind of embarrassing . . ."

"If something did break through, then we have to investigate. We are wizards, after all," Ridcully remarked cheerfully, as he searched for his crossbow. A chance to hunt down and shoot unspeakable horrors wasn't something he got to do every day after all.

IIIIIIIIII

Samuel grinned as the last of the thugs pulled a Burleigh & Stronginthearm and pointed it with intent to cause serious if not grievous bodily harm.

"Safety's on," Sam said cheerfully.

"Not this time," the thug replied as his finger took up the slack.

The commander's grin deepened when a meaty thwack caused the remaining thug's eyes to roll up, thus signifying the end of the fight.

"Excellent timing Sergeant," Sam quipped.

"Uh . . . I'm over here sir," a hesitant voice replied from the other end of the alley.

"Then who in the hell did that?"

The only reply to Sam's question was the pitter patter of little feet fleeing into the night.

"Uh . . . someone else sir?" the Sergeant said nervously.

"Yes someone else," Sam agreed in a reasonable tone, "and why did someone else have to save my life?"

"Because your backup was somewhere else sir?"

|||||

The Patrician was expressionless as the clerk handed over the report. This of course didn't mean much since the Patrician rarely had any sort of identifiable expression on his face.

"Just the summery for now," the Patrician said, "please." It never hurt to be polite after all.

"Well, we believe that it's a street kid sir. Associated with the fourth street Choir Boys, though not actually a member of the gang . . ."

|||||

"What do you mean not a member?" Sam demanded. "I remember those gangs, you're either in or you're meat. How can he stay out of it?"

"He's the Rat Catcher sir," Sergeant Cheery Littlebottom explained, "and the owners and patrons of several Dwarf restaurants would be rather annoyed if anything happened to him."

"What's that have to do with anything?" Sam demanded. "So the boy catches a few rats."

"No sir," the dwarf said, "you don't understand. Perhaps I should have said he's THE Rat Catcher of Ankh-Morpork."

"Is this another Dwarf thing?"

"Yes sir."

"What do I need to know?"

"You know how king translates roughly to mine boss in Dwarfish?"

"Yeah," Sam agreed.

"Rat Catcher translates roughly to Guardian of the Mine Boss's Grain and He Who Supplies the Pantry."

"All capital letters and everything?"

"I'm afraid so, sir."

"So it wasn't a human boy after all," Sam said to himself.

"It was, sir."

"How in the hell does a human child get a Dwarf noble title?"

"He supplies all the best restaurants," Sergeant Littlebottom said quickly, "some of the owners got together and supplied the appropriate bribes. Let's 'em charge double to have their meat get supplied by a genuine Rat Catcher."

"Why'd they go to all the trouble?"

"Kid's the best," he . . . er she replied quickly, "has a pair of mongooses and I'm told that they're very selective. Little buggers go in and only take out the ones they've been told to."

"Well trained," Sam commented.

"Not trained sir, they're just very good at following orders and he's very specific with the directions he gives them."

"He speaks mongoose?"

"No sir."

"We'll, that's a rel . . ."



"But they all speak snake so they can communicate in that until he learns."

|||||||

Harry reached into his bag and counted the day's take by feel, two more and they'd make their delivery. He paused to nod respectfully to the tiny figure in the black cloak, best to show a bit of professional courtesy to what was considered the unofficial head of his guild.

Make that one more, one more and they'd call it a day.

It had been several months since Harry had found himself in this strange city. Several months of living on the mean streets, several months of having to fight to get his fair share or somebody's fair share at any rate, and keep what was rightfully his, several of the best months of his life.

Just being able to fight back was something the young boy never grew tired of, so what if he broke a few bones along the way. Most of them did belong to other people after all and one of the things he'd always disliked about Dudders was the fact that the fat boy could never take what he so gleefully dished out.

"You, Harry the Rat Catcher?" a low voice asked from one of the shadows.

"Who wants to know?" Harry asked belligerently. He dropped his bag and reached into his pocket for the comforting presence of his new cosh. One of the best money could buy, no sense scrimping on something his life depended on.

"Just wanted to ask why you choose to break into a shop under guild protection," the voice said reasonably. Not even hinting on what the normal consequences for such an action was.

"Which one?" Harry asked. "The one last night or the one I'm gonna get after I drop these rats off?"

"Er . . ." This wasn't how it normally went when he caught up to an unlicensed thief, usually there was a lot more screaming and begging. "Last night," the voice replied with a trace of uncertainty.

"Oh, to pick up my groceries. I've got a much smaller list tonight," Harry said helpfully, "just three things."

"You know what happens to unlicensed thieves in this town right?"

"Who doesn't," Harry replied cheerfully.

"Then you know what we gotta do to you," the voice said firmly, attempting to get things back on track.

"Not the slightest idea," Harry said, throwing another figurative wrench into the man's mental gears.

"You broke into a shop, right?"

"Right," Harry confirmed.

"In this city, right?"

"Right again."

"And the shop had paid the guild, right?"

"Sure."

"Yet you still stole from it, right?"

"What?" Harry growled. "How dare you accuse me of stealing."

"Er . . . huh?"

"Stealing is wrong unless you're a member of the guild in good standing," Harry recited.

"Then . . . then what were you doing in that shop?"

"I told you," Harry sighed, "shopping. What else does someone do in a shop?" Harry shook his head in exasperation, this guy was

obviously more than a bit dim. "Oh, and I left a business card so they'd know who to contact if they wanted to get rid of their rats."

"What would you call taking things without paying for them?" The voice tried another tactic.

"Stealing," Harry said. He nodded again to the small figure, and that was two.

"So you see, when you took things from the shop without paying that was called what?"

"I didn't take anything from that shop without paying for it," Harry said, "I left the money in the safe along with my business card and an itemized list of everything I bought."

"You broke into a shop in the middle of the night and paid for everything you took?" the voice asked incredulously.

"Yep, why?"

"I gotta kick this up the line," the voice said, "I'm not sure what I'm supposed to do in this circumstance."

"Wait." Harry dug around one of his pockets before coming out with a business card. "Give this to your boss, special rates for de-ratting guild halls."

"Thanks."

IIIIIIII

The nervous looks on the faces of the staff told Sam that something was very wrong when he got home. With a growing sense of dread, he finally realized what was missing.

"Where's my wife?" Sam demanded.

"What wife, your grace?" One of the maids squeaked.

"Well," Sam growled.

"She went to the Shades sir," the trembling maid managed to reply, "we tried to talk her out of it but . . ."

"Damn," Sam cursed as he ran out of the house and towards the Shades. He knew better than anybody the sort of thing that happened in the bad parts of town and the Shades were worse than most since taking the title of bad part of town was much more difficult in a place like Ankh-Morpork which could be safely called the bad part of the Sto Plains if not the whole disk.

Scenes of horror flashed through his mind as he steeled himself for what he might find, god help the city if anything happened to Lady Sybil Ramkin for the watch surely won't.

Sam wasn't sure what he expected, but he was sure it wasn't what he found. His wife, Lady Sybil was marching through the Shades with a confused looking boy in tow. What's more, he was sure that he saw Gerty Picks, one of the roughest gang leaders produced by a very rough neighborhood crossing the street to avoid crossing the determined woman's path.

"Come along Harry," Sybil prompted, "don't dawdle."

"Yes ma'am," Harry agreed.

"Sybil," the Commander of the Watch said in confusion, "what's . . ."

"Imagine how I felt when one of your constables let slip about your close call," Sybil said with a smile, "I just had to go out to thank the person who saved you and let me tell you how shocked I was to learn that it was such an adorable little boy. Just look at his eyes."

"Uh . . ."

"I've invited him over to have supper with us," Sybil continued, "and he has been gracious enough to agree."

"I have to stop by a couple of restaurants first," Harry reminded the woman, "I promised to make my deliveries tonight."

“And you should always keep your promises,” Lady Sybil said in approval.

The rest of the day was a blur to Harry and through no fault of his own and at Lady Sybil's insistence, he somehow agreed to become a semi permanent house guest at the Vimes estate.

|||||

There is a theory that states that tools developed for a certain purpose will always have some basic similarities; a hammer will always have a flat striking surface and a place to grip with a hand, your average ta'kleth will always have a beveled edge for slicing through the carth in the lat'nel, and the typical pain-in-the-ass-that's-going-to-get-murdered-by-his-students' teacher will share certain traits with every pain-in-the-ass-that's-going-to-get-murdered-by-his-students' teacher.

The police would probably be a lot more effective if they ever noticed this fact.

The instructor glared down at the students with barely concealed contempt.

“Today you will be learning the vulgar art of avoiding traps,” he said with a sneer, “one that you shall have no trouble with if you aren't a complete dunder head.”

"How sir?" asked a young girl from BlackWidow house.

“By taking a field trip of course,” he said in a silky tone. “There's no better way to learn then by doing after all.” And if the brat had an accident, well . . . that was no fault of his was it?

|||||

Sam awoke with a start to find the two beady eyes of a mongoose staring at him from the base of the bed.

“Shove off back to the boy's room,” Sam growled.

The eyes seemed to narrow and the mongoose motioned for him to follow with a contemptuous wave of its paw.

"Damn it, what now?" Sam sighed. He followed the beast out of the house and to a small privacy hedge.

"Is that you, Commander Vimes?" Harry's voice asked softly.

"It is," Sam agreed, "what is it?"

"I was just wondering if you had any preferred method for dealing with a group of assassins?" Harry asked. "I'd normally just give them a cut across the throat before dumping them in the sewer, but I thought it'd be polite to ask you first . . . seeing that I'm your guest and all."

"What?" Sam took a step forward and was astonished to find the boy sitting on a group of unhappy assassins, looked like one instructor and several young students to his experienced eye. "What were they doing?"

"Lurking about, Commander Vimes." Harry replied. The expressionless boy grabbed the instructor by the hair and pulled the man's head back. "Should I give him a little slice sir?"

"Not yet." Sam grinned. "But would you mind removing his gag for a bit?"

"Yes sir," Harry agreed. He pulled the dirty rag out of the man's mouth.

"The Patrician will hear of this outrage," the angry assassin spat.

"I don't usually bother him with when I catch trespassers myself," Sam replied cheerfully, "what's all this about, then?"

"Merely a training exercise," the instructor said pompously, "had this been an actual attempt . . ."

"Then you'd be dead," Sam interrupted, "good work, Harry."

"Thank you, sir."

"Call me Mr. Vimes," Sam said as he checked the boy's knots, "you did save my life after all."

"Yes, Mr. Vimes," Harry said dutifully.

"And tell me something . . . "

"What is it, Mr. Vimes?"

"Why exactly were you lurking around here in the night?" And why the hell didn't you blunder into any of my traps? He thought to himself.

"Just wanted to get an idea of how the place was arranged, Mr. Vimes," Harry replied, "to find the best hiding spots and follow the runs, so the locals would know to move on."

"Very good then, shall we head back to the house? I'm sure that I could persuade Willikins to make you a bacon sandwich."

"Do you think that he's awake, Mr. Vimes?"

"I'm not sure he ever sleeps, Harry."

IIIIIIIIII

The girl endured the humiliation of being tossed into the back of a honey wagon (like she was a common seamstress for disc's sake!) to be transported back to the Guild of Assassins with the other students and their enraged professor. And she endured the lecture the professor gave when they returned, in which he explained that the night's events could all be laid on her shoulders (despite the fact that he was the first to go down after having stepped on something that squeaked), that she was a disgrace to the school, and that she never should have been accepted in the first place. Duchess or no Duchess.

A lecture that was cut short when a messenger summoned the suddenly white faced man to the Headmaster's office for a chat.

The girl's head tilted to the side for a moment as she contemplated her coming appointment and considered calling it off. Ultimately, she

decided that there was no reason to be rude. They were family after all, despite their frequent disagreements.

|||||||

Susan walked up Zephire Street to Weinrich & Boettcher, makers of the finest chocolate available and, after careful consideration, selected a small box of their best dark chocolate. Taking it, she retired to a convenient table that the owners would have sworn hadn't been there five minutes before and settled down to wait.

She looked up when a student from the Assassin's guild took the chair across from here.

"Good morning, Susan," the girl said cheerfully.

"Susy," Susan said in a clipped tone, "have you decided to give up your studies at the Guild in favor of a proper school?"

"No," Susy replied, "and to be honest, I'm still a bit surprised that you've decided to take the moral high ground here. Just because I want to have a closer relationship with grandfather . . ."

"Why don't we avoid that argument," Susan suggested, "we've already had it enough times."

"True," Susy agreed, "and even you have to admit that they've got one of the best libraries available."

"I'll concede that," Susan agreed with a sigh. "Aren't you going to tell me how your day went." Susan asked unemotionally.

"Another murder attempt," the girl replied blandly, "I've been giving serious thought to arranging an accident of my own." Should it prove necessary, she had a feeling that Lord Downey had already taken care of the problem. "This one is unusual in that it very nearly succeeded, though not in the manner the Professor intended I'm sure."

"Oh," Susan asked politely.



"The idea was to run me through Commander Vime's place and have me run afoul of one of the traps," she explained, "a bit better then the time he tried to rearrange the ingredients in poisons class, I'll admit." She sighed. "I'm still not sure exactly what happened, but we were somehow stopped by a boy with the greenest eyes."

"A boy," Susan said flatly.

"With eyes like emeralds," Susy agreed, "he's about my age."

"And he captured you and a fully trained assassin," Susan said slowly.

"Along with a couple of the more disposable students," Susy confirmed, "I'm not sure how he was able to do it."

"You said it almost succeeded?"

"He was about to drag a straight razor across my throat when I woke up," Suzy continued, "grandfather was there and everything."

"He's not usually wrong about these things," Susan said thoughtfully, "are you sure he wasn't there for the boy?"

"Positive," she said, "odd thing was the fact that the boy glanced at grandfather's shoulder for a second and then gave him a nod."

"I presume that he didn't go through with it or else you wouldn't be here any longer."

"You presume right," Susy said, "the boy stared at grandfather for a moment before remarking that it would be rude to kill us without asking his host first. Nothing of note happened after that."

"Does this boy have a name?" Susan asked.

"Harry," Susy replied with sparkling eyes, "he's about my age and I'm sure you'd love to meet him."

"I'll think about it," Susan said, "shall we meet next week at the same time?"

"I believe that I can find the time," Susy agreed.

|||||||

Lobsang was waiting when Susan returned from her meeting, hoping that his sort of girlfriend sort of fiancée hadn't worked herself into another fury on the trip home.

"How did your meeting go?" Lobsang asked.

"I swear, it's like being a mother, except I have no father to blame her attitude on!" Susan grumbled to herself.

"Ummm, actually..." Time trailed off as his girlfriend glared at him.

"What?" She knew she was about to discover something else about their relationship that would upset her.

"Well, we personifications don't reproduce with each other like humans do. So, congratulations... its a preteen girl!" he called out with nervous cheer.

"What!?" Susan's hair coiled and uncoiled as it tended to do when she was upset. "Do you mean to say, we had a child and you didn't tell me?"

Time pulled at the neck of his robe. "Well she didn't exist before this moment, although now she's always existed, but that's occurred just now."

"I thought she was just a younger version of me," Susan questioned trying to consider being the mother of herself, or at least another version of herself anyway.

"Well, yes and no. She is a younger version of you, but one that made different choices at different times and it was caused by our 'close' association giving rise to another, as yet unnamed, aspect."

"Unnamed? I thought she wanted to be called Susy, although that's probably just to annoy me."

"She has Time and Helpfulness to draw on, from us, and probably a bit to do with Death from your side of the family, so as she gets older

it'll be related in some way to what she ultimately chooses," he tried to explain.

"I always thought it was 'The child is father to the man'," Susan pointed out.

"Nah, if that was true birth would be a lot more painful."

AN: Polish by dogbertcarroll and meteoricshipyards. Title by fenriswolf001. Scenes by meteoricshipyards, dogbertcarroll, and one of the ideas was shamelessly stolen from The-Caitiff.

Omake: Susy

"You again?" Commander Vimes sighed, he looked down at the girl in the pit. "What are you here this time?"

"Um." The girl blushed deeply.

"Out with it," Sam barked.

"Can Harry come out to play," the girl asked hopefully.

Omake: The Wizards

"Excellent shot sir," the Bursar said dully.

"An owl on the wing by god," the Archchancellor cheered, "right here in our own University. Capital way to liven up a meal I'd say."

"It seems to have a note tied to it's leg Archchancellor," the Dean pointed out.

"Well out with it man, what does it say?"

"I can't bring myself to say it," the Dean growled, "take a look for yourself Archchancellor."

"Hogwarts . . . finest wizarding school?" The Archchancellor shouted.

Several sets of eyes narrowed, around the University bottles of poison were taken out of old cabinets and scorpion cages were

dusted off. The staff of this 'Hogwarts' was going to learn what it meant to challenge the greatest center of learning on the Disk.

Omake by David

heh speaking of rincewind Here's probably how his meeting with Harry went

R: Let me get this straight... You are a Orphan

H: Mmhmm

R:Who had terribly and abusive aunt and Uncle raise you... until by magic you ran away from home and came to Ankhmorphk... Rincewind nods.. smiles weakly... hey whats that over there??

H: Hmmm?

Harry turns back to see a Rincewind shaped dustcloud.

Because Rincewind can detect a 'generic orphan hero hidden away' plotline a mile away and he sure as hell isn't going to get stuck int he 'wizardry mentor' role!

Omake by moshehim

The dwarf sat on Harry so he wouldn't be able to escape again. Then, to Harry's horror, he began to sing:

"His eyes are as green as a fresh pickled toad, His hair is... who wrote that crap?", he asked. "Better come up with better lyrics, he exclaimed. "Hiho, hio, hihohihohiho," he said, clearing his voice cords, then, he began singing anew:

"Gold, gold, gold, gold, gold, gold, gold, gold, Glod, glod, glod, glod... Gold, gold, gold,. gold... here, let's see? Defeated the Dark Lord, Gold, gold gold!"

He finally shut up, and let a mortified Harry Potter go.

## Interview

"Mr. Weasley," the young reporter began, "you have lived a long and exciting life. First as a member of the resistance group that finally brought down the Dark Lord Voldemort, then as a professional Quidditch player, and now as a respected politician. I was wondering . . ."

"If I may," Ron interrupted. "I didn't do much to take down Voldemort, I played in the lowest ranked team in the league, and my duties with the Wizengamot could be done by a trained monkey."

"I . . ."

"Please continue," Ron prompted gently.

"I was wondering why you agreed to grant me this interview," the girl said shyly, "I've been told that you rarely speak to reporters."

"It's because of your last name," the old man said, "your grandmother . . . Luna was a friend of mine."

"That's what I wanted to talk to you about," the girl said quickly.

"Luna?" Ron chuckled. "She was something."

"Dad named my oldest sister after her," the girl spoke up, "he named me after the Tempest."

"Eh?"

"Miranda," the girl prompted, "the girl from the play."

"Afraid I was never much good when it came to culture," the old man said with a shrug, "go on Ms. Lovegood, ask your question."

"I have two questions," the girl said. "Did you have anything to do with avenging my grandmother?"

"You're asking me to admit to having a hand in the murder of the entire Malfoy family?" Ron asked with a grin. "I'd like to say yes, there is nothing in the world that I'd rather do than say that I wiped them from the world . . . especially after what happened to Luna. Guess the git thought he could get away with it, what with Harry gone and all."

"You didn't?" The girl asked in shock. "But I've read that you were Harry's best friend."

"Were," Ron agreed sourly, "I had a bit of a temper back then."

"Says the man that threw his chair at the Chief Warlock in the last session."

"Bloody git had it coming to him," Ron said quickly. "Never did like the bastard anyway. No, when I say I used to have a temper, I mean that I used to lose it for the smallest and most insignificant reasons."

"Like what?"

"I don't even remember what prompted my last row with Harry," Ron sighed, "but it couldn't have been important. I crawled back to apologize a week later and he wouldn't even speak to me. I suppose that every man has their limit, even Harry Potter."

"Oh . . . I don't suppose you'd know if he's my grandfather, would you?"

"I wish I did," Ron said honestly, "I will say that it's either him or Neville Longbottom. Can't think of anyone else that Luna had such a close relationship with."

"Thank you Mr. Weasley," the girl put her quill away.

"I'd suggest talking with Hermione Granger, the Headmistress at Hogwarts. In the end, she was the only one that never betrayed Harry."

"That's my next stop," Miranda assured the old man.

"And please, give her my best."

"I will."

|||||

Hermione was waiting at the front gates for the girl to arrive.

"I understand that you want to ask me a couple questions about Harry Potter?" Hermione said with a grin.

"Yes ma'am," Miranda agreed. The girl was more than a bit intimidated by the prospect of speaking to the longest reigning Headmaster in Hogwarts History.

"Please come in then." Hermione waved the young girl into the castle and led her to a comfortable sitting room on the first floor. "Now then, what can I do for you?"

"How did you know what I wanted to ask you?"

"I've been Headmistress of this school for longer than you've been alive," Hermione said with a lazy grin, "and that's all I'm going to say on that particular subject."

"Mister Ron Weasley asked me to pass along his best."

"Thank you," Hermione said calmly.

"He also said that you were the only one that never betrayed Harry Potter," Miranda continued, "and that you might be able to answer my questions about him."

"That was a sweet thing for Ron to say," Hermione said tearfully, "but I'm afraid that it wasn't true. In the end, we all betrayed him."

"May I ask how?"

"The war had ended and I had thrown myself into teaching," Hermione began, "I still corresponded with Harry of course, I just

spent less and less time on the replies. I didn't even realise that we'd grown apart until your grandmother died."

"What do you mean grown apart?" The girl asked.

"I thought it would be best for Harry to hear what happened from a friend," Hermione said with a pinched look on her face, "so I looked through my papers for his contact information. It took me four hours but I finally found an unopened letter from five years before wishing me a happy life. Let that be a lesson to you Ms. Lovegood," Hermione said sharply, "never let yourself fall into the trap of thinking that your career is more important than your friends."

"Do you know why my grandmother was killed ma'am?"

"I suspect that it was because your mother and father were dating," Hermione sighed, "Draco couldn't stand the idea of his daughter being 'sullied' by a Lovegood."

"Oh. Mr. Weasley said he thought it was because Harry wasn't around and my grandfather Malfoy thought he'd be able to get away with it."

"I suspect that may have also been a factor," Hermione allowed, "Draco would have never dared try anything if he thought that Harry was still around."

"Mr. Weasley also said that he thought my grandfather was either Harry Potter or Neville Longbottom, that no one else was close enough to my grandmother."

"Between the two it would have been Harry," Hermione said firmly.

"How can you be so sure?" Miranda asked. "And why were Neville Longbottom and my grandmother so close?"

"He liked plants and she liked animals, they used to go on expeditions together." Hermione licked her lips. "And as for how I'd be so sure, well . . . let's just say that Luna lacked some things that Neville looked for in a lover."



"You mean . . ."

"I mean I'm very sure that Luna and Neville never got together and why don't we leave it at that?"

"Do you think that Harry Potter is still alive?"

"I don't know," Hermione admitted, "but I'd like to think so. The world would be a much darker place if I knew that I'd never be able to tell him how sorry I was about how I treated our friendship."

"Thank you for your time Headmistress."

"Not at all Ms. Lovegood."

AN: Been a while since I put anything up, that's not because I'm not writing it's because I've got nothing finished.

Omake: More on Polyjuice

"Hey Hermione," Ron called out, "could you do me a favor?"

"What is it Ron?" The bookworm asked.

"Do you think you could brew up another batch of polyjuice?" Ron asked.

"Shouldn't be too hard," the girl agreed, "why?"

"It's for me and Harry," Ron explained.

"Harry?"

"I've got no idea," Harry confessed.

"Ron?"

"Well . . . I was thinking that Harry could take a potion with one of your hairs in it and then I could . . ."

“NO,” Harry said quickly, “not gonna happen.”

“But I'd be willing to take a Ginny hair potion afterwards,” Ron whined.

“No.”

“But . . .”

“NO.”

“Fine,” Ron said in defeat, “I'll just get Dean or someone to help. I thought you were my friend.”

“And no using my hairs,” Hermione called out after the retreating boy, “honestly.”

AN: It popped into my head and now it's in yours.

Addition by Chris Hill

Harry was really starting to worry about Ron and his one track mind when it

came to Polyjuice and sex.

It was not what he wanted the damned potion for.

No, the potion, combined with the little that a certain dog taught him

before he died would be used in a very special way.

And he had just enough of ol' Vode to do it.

---

Umbridge brought in the tea as was normal when meeting with the Minister. A

normal part of her day, and she wanted things to go right. There was so much

to do to damage Potter, and it could keep the person she needed here.

As for the Minister, Fudge was doing his best to keep his seat in office. If

he hadn't been so stubborn, and listened to Dumbledore and Potter he wouldn't

be in this mess. As it was, his main advisor was now in Azkaban, and he was

just a few days to weeks away from being out of office unless he could pull

off a miracle. "Not today, Delores. I'm too busy."

"Too busy to have some tea? Potter will be in soon and we need to be ready.

If he gives his testimony to the Wizengamot then we will both be out of

here." the toadlike woman said as she poured them both a cup of tea.

Fudge snorted, and then gasped as Deloras changed form, into that of

Voldemort! That was how he was hiding! Normally, he would just plead for his

life, but with all the upsets, he just grabbed his wand and fired a reducto,

splitting the former undersecretary in half, and spilling tea all over the place.

Wait...

He cleaned up the tea a bit and then used Deloras's wand to cause a bit more

damage to the office.

With this body, he would be a hero.

---

'FUDGE KILLS VOLDEMORT!' the headlines screamed on the Daily Prophet.

---

'FUDGED KILLED BY DEATHEATERS' was the headline the following day.

Harry was going to frame the two front pages.

Two dimwits with one dose.

Now, how to get Lucius, and then Snape?

OMAKE for Neutered by zeynel

Hermione was sitting with Harry in the Great Hall:

"Oh, my parents had no problem with the adoption once it was explained to them. I just have two sets of parents and no more bad hair problems now -thanks magic and magical adoption, I got a bit of each world-. Oh, and Mother -Narcissa, I mean- and mum just love each other! The moment she learned about teeth whitening - impossible with magic-, they became fast friends! It's not like the cost is much for a family like the Malfoy, and it makes a nice income for my parents. And so Lucius is forbidden to hurt them. Besides, it interested him, too, one more way to look better than his peers at the wizengamot..."

Harry nodded, before frowning.

"Hey, do you think Lockheart did it, too? I always thought his too white teeth were suspicious..."

Hermione blinked before tilting her head, pondering the question.

"That... Is quite possible, now that I think of it."

Lavender, who was listening quietly some seats away, asked suddenly:

"But... Does it not bother you, having Malfoy as a brother?"

"Yes!" added Parvati, several murmures agreeing with her "He's not the menace he was before, but it doesn't stop him from being unpleasant!"

Harry and Hermione both burst into laughter, to the surprise of those surrounding them.

"Well, everybody has unpleasant family members. And I'm the Malfoy heiress, now." Hermione smirked. "I mean, with Draco unable to continue the line... He's been allowed to keep the name and have a little trifle to live with, but the fortune and title are mines!"

Disclaimer: Slightly used but never abused.

## Harry's Slightly Used Invisibility Cloak Emporium

Harry's temples began to throb as he felt repeated attempts to jam a probe through his developing mental shields.

He wouldn't have had to go through any of this crap if Snape had bothered to teach rather than torture, he thought to himself, but he figured the odds were really against that ever happening.

He'd had to find out how to develop mental shields by going through all his school books. Strangely enough there was a brief mention of an easy to use technique in the back of his self transfigurations book that had worked fine, well it had worked fine against Snape and Dumbledore, Voldemort was another matter and he was proving himself to be even more a pain in the ass than he usually was.

"God damn it," Harry growled. "I have had it." The boy rummaged around his trunk until he found a sock and then walked to the yard, snagging a can of soup from the kitchen as he went. Harry slipped the can into the sock and gave it a couple practice swings before he followed his nose to the Order guard.

"Pot . . ." Harry cut the man off with a well placed strike and another and another and another, actually things just went red for a few minutes. When Harry came back to his senses, he saw a mop of greasy hair and a bloodied invisibility cloak.

"Doesn't look like I killed the bastard," Harry sighed. "Pity." Then in the spirit of all good adventures, Harry emptied the bastard's pockets and appropriated the invisibility cloak, never know when a spare might come in handy.

Of course, between the beatings and the chores, Harry learned a lot about how to get bloodstains out of damn near everything.

Harry had just about finished cleaning up and packing his things when he was disturbed by another of the many people that had played a hand in ruining his life.

"Harry," Dumbledore said with a kindly voice, "I . . ." Harry cut the old man off with a soup can to the side of the face. It took three more hits before Dumbledore stopped moving.

"Looks like I didn't manage to kill you either," Harry mused as he secured the Headmaster's wand, "consider this a thank you for the day you left me on the bloody doorstep." An experimental wave produced a cascade of sparks from the tip of Dumbledore's wand, which cheered Harry up a bit, as he knew the underage magic office tracked by wand rather than by person.

"And why don't we just figure that the wand and everything else in your pockets are your way of apologizing?" Harry asked. "Say absolutely nothing if you agree that I just came up with a splendid plan."

Dumbledore didn't admit so much as a groan, signifying that he did indeed think that Harry had come up with a marvelous plan.

With that, Harry added Dumbledore's things to his own and skipped out of the Dursley house with smile on his face, a song in his heart, and a slightly dented can of chicken soup in a bloody sock.

IIIIIIIIII

The first hint the Order had that something had gone wrong was when Snape didn't show up for the meeting.

Course since no one cared about the nasty bastard, this hint was largely ignored. Well ignored if you don't count Tonks' attempt to start a 'wave' like she'd seen done at muggle football games.

The second hint the Order received was when they noticed that the Headmaster was more than three hours 'fashionably late.'

Most members just noted that the Headmaster was a busy man and resolved to wait until the old man had enough spare time to devote to fighting Voldemort.

Between arranging his sock collection and inspecting the latest issue of 'Gigantic Asses', Dumbledore had been late a couple of times before.

The final hint the Order got that all was not right in the world was when a bloody Severus Snape showed up and began screaming something about Potter going insane. Granted, most of the members were too enchanted by the way the Potion Master's teeth kept flying out to pay much attention, but enough people got the gist of it to direct the rest to the Dursley Abode.

|||||

Harry took stock of the situation. It didn't look good, all he had was an untraceable wand of immense power that had once belonged to the Headmaster, two invisibility cloaks, several assorted potions, an assortment of mysterious items, a large amount of cash in Galleons as well as Pounds, some . . . come to think of it, things were looking pretty damned good after all.

"Go me," Harry cheered himself. Damn he was good. "Now all I gotta do is learn some incredible magic and." Some of the seldom used gears in Harry's brain began to turn. "And then they'll use the underage magic detectors to catch me." He glanced down at his new untraceable wand of immense power that had once belonged to the Headmaster. "And I was really looking forward to playing with this thing too." Best to be on the safe side and make sure that the charms followed the wand rather than the wizard.

The gears continued turning, how was he going to protect himself from the assorted obstacles that were sure to throw themselves into his path without using massive amounts of magic?

"Illegal things for sale," a man in a large trenchcoat called out, "all kinds of illegal and semi-legal things for sale."

"That'll work," Harry said cheerfully. He walked up to the man. "Do you take gold?"

|||||



Arthur was in his element. As Director of the Department that Delt with Misuse of Muggle Artifacts, he was the Order Expert in muggle affairs and thus was the most qualified man available to track Harry down in the muggle world. The dozens of better qualified muggleborn that had been passed over to give him both jobs would have begged to disagree, but they were muggleborn so their opinions didn't count.

Arthur crept slowly, ever so slowly through the alley way clad in his pink kilt an lime green jodhpurs.

"Easy now," he whispered to himself, "steady as she goes . . ." Arthur felt a sharp pain in his neck and collapsed to the ground.

"Are you okay, Mr. Weasley?" Harry asked in concern.

"What happened?" Arthur gasped.

"I'm afraid I had to tase you, Mr. Weasley," Harry replied mournfully.

"I'm not familiar with that spell," Arthur said thoughtfully, "where did you learn it?"

"It's not a spell," Harry explained, "I'm trying to avoid doing magic."

"Sensible," Arthur agreed, "so how did you . . ."

"It's a muggle device," Harry explained. He pulled the taser out of his pocket.

"Fascinating," Arthur eyes were shining as he regarded the device in Harry's hands. "How does it work?"

IIIIIIII

Hermione looked up from her book suddenly.

"Harry senses . . . tingling . . ." the girl sighed. "Can't he stay out of trouble for one damned week? Just one bloody week."

Hermione closed her book half way.

"On the other hand, this is a really good chapter and it's not like he'll need my help right away," Hermione justified to herself. "So it wouldn't hurt anything if I just read a few more pages before rushing off to help him."

Her mind made up, Hermione turned back to her book, an unabridged copy of War and Peace in the original Russian, thus assuring that she wouldn't be in the story any time soon.

|||||

"What's that Arthur?" Tonks asked. The jolly old man was playing with an odd looking black box.

"Harry gave it to me," Arthur said proudly. He activated it again and watched the lightning dance between the two contacts. "It's a muggle device of some sort."

"What's it do?" Tonks asked.

"Well . . ."

"Urhagggg," Tonks squealed as she toppled to the floor.

"It uses batteries," Arthur said to the trembling Auror, "isn't it just grand?"

"Arthur what did you just do to poor Nymphadora?" Molly demanded. The rest of the order turned to watch. "Well?" Molly demanded.

"Just showing her this muggle toy that Harry gave me."

"Well do it after the meeting," Molly said with a long suffering sigh, "we need to pay attention while other people give their reports."

"Yes, dear."

|||||

Harry wandered into the best (and most hazardous) joke shop in Diagon Alley.

"Harry," the twins called out.

"Buddy."

"Partner."

"Hippopotamus."

"What?" George asked, as he gave his brother an odd look.

"Hippopotamus Handcuffs," Fred replied, "that's what we can call our newest prank."

"Brilliant."

"Masterful."

"Profitable," Harry interrupted.

"We hope so anyway," Fred agreed.

"What can we do for you, Harry?" George asked.

"Just wondering if you two would be willing to help me with a few things," Harry replied, "nothing much."

"What can we do for you, Harry?"

"I just need your help marketing a few things," Harry replied.

He pulled out his spare invisibility cloak and an assortment of other items looted from the Order members that had been unfortunate enough to cross his path.

"You think you could set up a display for all this maybe?"

"Sure thing," George agreed, "this a one time thing or will you have more stuff?"

"POTTER," Snape screeched. "I knew I'd find you here, now give me my wand and . . ."

A red haired fist came out of nowhere, silencing the gobshite and removing him from the land of consciousness.

"Flying Fisting," Fred explained proudly, "our store security system."

"Gonna be a pain to explain what happened to him thought," George sighed, "and I'm kinda annoyed that I didn't get to do that myself."

"Tell him I did it," Harry said cheerfully.

He walked up to his former Potions Professor and planted several kicks in the man's ribs before crouching down and once again removing everything of value on the bastard's person.

"And you know what you asked about getting more stuff?" Harry asked over his shoulder. "I'm pretty sure that there will be plenty."

"Might be a good idea to build up the inventory before selling it all then," Fred said thoughtfully.

"Might also be a good idea to take some of our goods to test out," George added. Visions of profit danced in his head, they didn't even need to advertise that Harry Potter used their stuff, word of mouth would suffice.

"Thanks for helping me out guys," Harry said.

"No problem Harry-"

"-anything for a friend."

"Still, I really appreciate the fact that you didn't try to sell me out to Dumbledore."

"Dumbledore trusts Snape," Fred explained.

"Which makes us seriously question his judgment-"

"-and his sanity."

"-and his sexuality."

"-and his sanity."

"We already used sanity," George pointed out.

"Yeah, but there are more reasons than just Snape to question it. Look at who else he's hired."

"Good point." Boot to the ribs.

"Good point." Boot to the ribs.

|||||

Harry whistled cheerfully as he headed down Knockturn alley, enjoying the sights and sounds that would have surely given the Dursleys conniption fits.

He made a mental note to have Hermione develop a spell that could inflict... err gift his family members with copies of his memories of walking through the place.

'Of course Hermione may not be the best person to create a spell, since magic seems to be based on something other than logic. Maybe with Luna's help...' Harry thought to himself before his mind drifted off imagining Luna and Hermione working late at night together and then Susan came in . . .

|||||

Several Death Eaters had quietly filtered into the alley when they had been told by one of their informants that Harry had been seen out and about without escort.

They knew Harry wasn't even a fully trained wizard, but he had faced their lord in battle several times and lived, so rather than rushing in throwing spells at him and risking their lives, they decided to do something that was decidedly Slytherin for a change, at the request of one of their former Ravenclaw members, strangely enough.

They'd gotten a hold of a young Boggart, that had never been exposed to any living thing before and they planned on having it imprint itself on him.

Boggart's young are extremely dangerous in that just before they reach maturity they will bond to any creature they are exposed to and using that bond they will increase the fear to lethal levels and feed off the fear of the creature until it dies of it, giving them the energy they need to reach full maturity.

So having bought a boggart that had been raised in captivity and not bonded to anyone the Death Eaters had what they believed to be a fool proof plan.

Unfortunately the shopkeeper had been a bigger fool than usual and had separated the young boggart from its parent before it had been taught how to hunt and feed off of emotions, so when the Death Eaters and had banished it from its container to just in front of a fantasizing Harry something unusual occurred.

IIIIIIII

In light of who was involved with the scene, it wasn't surprising that news of the event spread at the only thing faster than the speed of light. Rumor.

"What!? I most certainly was not making with Luna and Susan in the middle of Knockturn Alley!"

"What? I was being ravished by Hermione and Susan in Knockturn Alley? Oh, poo. If I knew that I would have made sure to attend."

"What!? Susan was being cosy with Hermione and Luna in the middle of Knockturn Alley!? And they asked Harry Potter to join them!? SUSAN!"

"Urk! Hannah, I swear, I wouldn't do that! ...Not that there's anything wrong with it."

"Well, no. But I refuse to loan you out to anyone, Susan. At least not without me."

|||||

Several shocked Death Eaters stumbled into the Dark Lord's hide out after witnessing Harry's reaction to the boggart during their unsuccessful attempt on his life.

"Tell me you fools haven't failed me again," Voldemort growled.

"It wasn't a total loss master," one of the Death Eaters simpered, "we learned Potter's greatest fear."

"We already know Potter's greatest fear." Voldemort struck what he thought was a menacing pose.

"Er . . . it's not you, master."

"Of course it's me," Voldemort shouted. "I killed the boy's family, his friend, and made his life a living hell!"

"You were also unsuccessful in all your attempts to kill him, master." one of the Death Eaters pointed out. "According to 'Teen Witch,' he regards you as a major annoyance but . . ."

"Annoyance?" Voldemort roared.

"A major one, master."

"CRUCIO." Voldemort held the curse until the man's brains were leaking out his nose. "If Potter is not sensible enough to hold me as his greatest fear, then what does he fear above all other things?"

"Well . . ."

|||||

Severus Snape wasn't the only Order member lurking around the twin's joke shop. Arthur Weasley had again picked up Harry's trail and had followed the boy from Diagon Alley to a sparsely populated section of town that Arthur had never been in before.

"Hey Mr. Weasley. It's you following me, right?"

"Harry you shouldn't--"

"I know, Mr. Weasley, but before we discuss that, I wanted to know if you've ever seen a Muggle device like this?"

"What is it?" Arthur's attention was captured by a small device in Harry's hands. "Does it use batteries?"

"Nope," Harry replied, "would you like to see how it works?"

"If it's not too much trouble," Arthur agreed, his love of muggle devices again getting the better of his sense of duty to the Order.

"Just look right into the nozzle," Harry replied as he flicked off the pepper sprays' safety.

He'd actually feel some guilt for using muggle defense measures against the man who treated him like one of his own sons if not for the fact that the man didn't seem to mind as long as he got to play with it himself afterwards.

|||||||

Fred and George had a large dunk tank set up in front of their shop.

"Ladies and gentlemen," Fred called out, "step right up and throw a dung balloon at the git."

Severus Snape was tied up, gagged, and ready to be dumped into a rather unpleasant liquid.

"Or you can hit the target and dunk him in the ooze," George added, "but he might escape if you do that."

"Can we do it, Aunty?" Susan asked. "Please?"

"How much?" Amelia Bones asked.

"Free for current and past students of Hogwarts," Fred replied glibly.



"All we ask is that you take a look at our store after you throw all the dung balloons in your bucket," George added, "throw your dung balloons, look in the store, and get a new bucket."

"A deal like that you'll never find at Zonkos," Fred said quickly.

"We'll take two buckets then." Amelia stretched out her throwing arm. "Let's see if this old girl still has it."

"Hit him in the nose and we'll refill your bucket," George called out.

Within seconds, they had a large crowd formed in front of their shop. Future generations of businessmen would agree that it was the most brilliant piece of marketing in history.

IIIIIIII

Pansy was able to keep her feelings bottled until she and the other girls were ushered out of the Dark Lord's audience chamber and given some time to digest their orders.

"YES," Pansy squealed, "score."

"You actually like the fact that the Dark Lord has ordered us into Potter's harem?" Tracy exclaimed in shock.

"What?" Pansy asked when the others stared at her in shock. "It's better than having to marry Draco."

There were several sage nods of agreement at that pronouncement.

"Good point," Tracy conceded. "Though I must admit that this latest plan to kill or emotionally destroy Potter is a bit less . . ."

"Traditional?" Daphne suggested.

"Yes, traditional," Tracy agreed, "than his other plans."

"Is it even possible to kill a teenage boy with too much sex?" another girl wondered aloud.

"Oh, haven't you read "Harems Throughout The Middle Ages"? \*sigh\*  
"The Earl of Pudding died of a massive sex overdose at the age of 19, leaving his 32 wives behind. His ghost watched over them until they all died, some 20 years later. He was quoted to have said, "I knew having a minimum sex requirement, and removing the "'til death do we part" clause as a good idea."

"Granger? How'd you find the Dark Lord's secret base?"

"The Straps 'n' Things BDSM Parlor does not a secret base make."

IIIIIIII

"What was that?" Arthur asked with tears flowing down his face.

"It's pepper spray," Harry replied, "think of it as a muggle potion and this device is a muggle potion thrower."

"Do you have any more of them?" Arthur asked eagerly.

"Sure," Harry agreed, "loads. Would you like me to give you a couple to play with . . . er . . . examine?"

IIIIIIII

Dumbledore was strolling down the alley. He'd heard there was a sale on slightly used invisibility cloaks along with several other things needed by the Order and he was eager to pick them up before they had a chance to fall into the wrong hands.

After pushing his way through the enormous crowd that had formed around the entrance to the WWW joke shop, he beheld the most extraordinary sight. An angry mob had formed and was pelting an enraged baboon with dung balloons. Though, there was something off about the baboon . . .

"My word," Dumbledore gasped, "Severus."

He pushed his way to the front of the crowd and confronted the Weasley twins.

"Boys," he began in his most grandfatherly tone, "I'm going to have to insist that you release Severus this instant and . . ."

"Afraid we can't do that, Professor." George said mournfully. "The charms holding him there are too powerful for us."

"Only way to let him down is to hit that target over there with one of the balloons," Fred added, "care to try your luck?"

IIIIIIII

"What do you got now Arthur?" Tonks asked. "And please don't use it on me this time."

"It's a potion throwing device," Arthur said with a happy grin, "Harry gave it to me."

"If Potter had it then it can't possibly work," Snape said with a haughty sneer. "And aside from the fact that it's tainted by the boy's incompetence, there is no way in hell that mere muggles could make any useful discoveries in the field of potions." Proving once again the old adage that you can't teach a hidebound bigoted bastard new tricks.

"Shall we try it out then?" Arthur asked hopefully.

"Do as you wish," Snape snarled.

"Right then." Arthur pointed the device at Snape as he mentally went through the checklist that Harry gave him. "Here we go then."

"Arrrrg," Snape screamed, "it burns, my eyes they burn."

"I guess it works then," Tonks said dryly.

"Quite," Arthur agreed with a pleased smile, "they only work once though."

"Do you think Harry could get me one?" Tonks asked hopefully.

"I'm sure he could," Arthur said, "he gave me ten of them to play with."

"Where does he get those wonderful toys?"

|||||

Harry was polishing his new super wand when he felt the hairs on the back of his neck begin to stand up. He jumped up and spun around, scanned the motel room, but couldn't see anything out of place.

'Maybe, I'm just getting paranoid?' Harry contemplated the thought for a moment. 'Nah, got too many people after me to be paranoid.'

Shrugging off his unease he turned back around to begin polishing his wand again, when he felt someone tap him on the side of his neck with a wand.

'Busted!' Harry thought to himself, wondering who had actually caught up with him, but relatively sure it was one of the Order, since anyone else would probably have cursed him in the back by now.

He slowly turned around and was stunned speechless to find himself face to face with Luna Lovegood, wearing some sort of mist like cloak and not much else from what glimpses he kept catching as the cloak shifted.

"L-Luna?" he finally managed to stutter out as she pushed him towards the bed, recalling her or someone polyjuicing her having accosted him in the middle of the alley and causing a scene, and a serious need for a change of boxers, earlier that day.

The blond Ravenclaw didn't say a word as her misty cloak faded away, making him wonder what exactly was going on with her, not that he was complaining, he was confused not stupid.

As she slunk towards him, rolling her hips, her form shifted into Susan Bones.

"Tonks!" he grinned as he finally figured out what was going on.

The smirking figure's wand disappeared as her features shifted into those of his favorite metamorph and the pinkette tackled him onto the bed.

|||||

Tonks examined the muggle potion throwing device, careful not to set it off. "Next time you catch up with Harry, tell him I want to know where he got all of these things. Non-magical means of taking down suspects and magical resistant creatures without causing any permanent damage could make us a mint."

"I'll let him know," Arthur promised, pleased to have someone else share an interest in muggle devices.

Molly rolled her eyes as she served supper, happy that her husband had found someone else to bother with his hobby.

|||||

Luna Lovegood frowned as she had the distinct feeling that someone was having fun with her and she wasn't involved somehow. Well no matter, she resolved to make whoever it was make it up to her later, when she found out who it was and in the meantime she had course work due on

her mail order potions mastery.

|||||

Harry slept the sleep of the just... well more the sleep of the just completely exhausted, but deep enough that he never noticed the pink haired girl in bed with him dissolve into mist and vanish from the room.

AN: Not quite the way I expected things to turn out, not that there's anything wrong with that. Happy Boxing day if I've got the time zones right and have gotten it up in time. Polish and scenes by dogbertcarroll, scenes by rijl\_kent and SP .

OMAKE for Neutered by zeynel

Hermione was sitting with Harry in the Great Hall:

"Oh, my parents had no problem with the adoption once it was explained to them. I just have two sets of parents and no more bad hair problems now -thanks magic and magical adoption, I got a bit of each world-. Oh, and Mother -Narcissa, I mean- and mum just love each other! The moment she learned about teeth whitening - impossible with magic-, they became fast friends! It's not like the cost is much for a family like the Malfoy, and it makes a nice income for my parents. And so Lucius is forbidden to hurt them. Besides, it interested him, too, one more way to look better than his peers at the wizengamot..."

Harry nodded, before frowning.

"Hey, do you think Lockheart did it, too? I always thought his too white teeth were suspicious..."

Hermione blinked before tilting her head, pondering the question.

"That... Is quite possible, now that I think of it."

Lavender, who was listening quietly some seats away, asked suddenly:

"But... Does it not bother you, having Malfoy as a brother?"

"Yes!" added Parvati, several murmures agreeing with her "He's not the menace he was before, but it doesn't stop him from being unpleasant!"

Harry and Hermione both burst into laughter, to the surprise of those surrounding them.

"Well, everybody has unpleasant family members. And I'm the Malfoy heiress, now." Hermione smirked. "I mean, with Draco unable to continue the line... He's been allowed to keep the name and have a little trifle to live with, but the fortune and title are mine!"

## Alliance

Hermione walked into her dorm room with a frown on her face. It had taken months of thought, but she was sure she'd finally found a way to help Harry defeat or at the very least severely weaken the Dark Lord Voldemort.

"Parvati," Hermione said abruptly, "I need you to do something for me."

"What is it Hermione?"

"Give this note to your twin sister," Hermione ordered, "and tell her that I'd like her to follow the instructions."

"Why should I?" Parvati demanded. "And why should she?"

"Several reasons come to mind," Hermione replied. "You owe me for all the help I've given you over the years, I know several things that you'd rather not have spread around, it's important, and finally I'd like to think we're friends and friends help each other. Pick one."

"I'll go with the last," Parvati said cheerfully, "you really consider me your friend?"

"Of course," Hermione said quickly, "we have known each other since our first day haven't we?"

"Yes but . . . never mind," the witch said quickly, "I'm just glad to know that you consider me a friend . . . Lavender too?"

"She snores," Hermione said flatly, "and I haven't strangled her to death . . . not even before I learned to put silencing charms around her bed."

"Point taken," Parvati said with a nod, "anything else you need?"

"I . . . I may have an offer for you later," Hermione said slowly, "ask your sister if you'd both like to attend the meeting."

"Meeting?"

"Later," Hermione waved the other girl off, "it'd . . . I need to confirm some things first."

"Alright Hermione," Parvati agreed, "I'll take care of everything."

"Thank you Parvati, I'll be in the library if you need me."

Hermione was in the library with a large stack of books on proper pureblood customs and etiquette when she heard a set of familiar footsteps that indicated that she was no longer alone.

"Did they have a response?" Hermione asked without looking up from her book.

"They've agreed to a meeting Granger," the Indian girl said.

"Thanks Parvati," Hermione said, "are you and your sister thinking about attending?"

"How'd you know?" Parvati demanded. It was only then that Hermione looked up to see the Ravenclaw crest on the other girl's uniform.

"Sorry about that," Hermione said contritely, "I hope I didn't give things away." She quickly looked around to make sure that no one was paying attention to their conversation.

"Uh . . ."

"And I knew because we've known each other for several years," Hermione lectured, "and I may not be the most observant witch in the world but I'm also not an idiot."

"Does anyone else know?"

"Angelina and Katie," Hermione said, "least I'm fairly sure they know. It's not something we talk about."



"Thanks Hermione."

"Like I said, we're friends."

IIIIIIII

Hermione and the Patil twins were already waiting when their two Slytherin guests arrived for the meeting.

"What's this about Granger?" Daphne demanded.

"Draco has been ordered to keep an eye on you and kill you if you refuse an order that will be coming in three days," Hermione said in an unemotional tone, "the order is that your family will join Voldemort and you will be given to one of the older Death Eaters as a reward for a job well done."

"How'd you . . ."

"Draco has no intention of giving you a chance to agree," Hermione continued, "he plans to pass on that you've refused regardless of the answer. He and his two goons have already chosen an empty portion of dungeon, Draco plans to go first, followed by the two goons, and finally a long line of paying customers. Tracy," Hermione said as she turned to the other Slytherin in the room, "you're scheduled for two weeks from now but it's basically the same thing . . . only difference is that rather than a reward for one of the Death Eaters then you're a reward for several. Draco isn't planning on lying if you refuse since he's already been given permission to . . . start things out so to speak."

"How do you know these things?" Daphne demanded.

"I presume that you're willing to enter into a binding magically enforced contract agreeing not to reveal the source of my information?" Hermione asked with a raised eyebrow. "If so, then I can assure you that the consequences for breaking it will be quite dire."

"Agreed," Daphne said after a meaningful look shared with Tracy.

"I'm afraid that I'll have to ask the same from you and your sister Parvati," Hermione said apologetically.

"Of course Hermione," Parvati agreed, "if you think it's important."

"Could mean the difference between life and death," Hermione said simply.

"Let's see the contract," Daphne demanded. Her normal pale complexion became several shades whiter as she examined the document. "This is . . ."

"Quite unpleasant for you if you violate it," Hermione agreed, "I wouldn't worry though if I were you. It would all be over in about four hours on the outside."

Daphne pulled a small folding knife out of the folds in her robe and carefully made a small cut on the back of her hand.

"I presume you brought a quill?"

"I always have a quill with me," Hermione agreed. She handed the item to the other girl and watched as Daphne carefully signed the contract in her own blood. "Tracy?"

"Give me that knife Daph," Tracy sighed.

"Wait," Hermione said quickly. She hit the blade with a couple of quick cleaning charms and did the same to Daphne's hand. "It's not a good idea to mix blood or use a dirty blade."

"Why not?" Tracy asked as she calmly made a cut on the back of her own hand.

"Blood contains diseases that can be transmitted to other people," Hermione lectured, "and a cut that hasn't been cleaned can become infected."

"You think I have dirty blood?" Daphne asked with a frown.

"I don't know," Hermione replied, "I'd have done the same thing if I was making the cut on my own hand and giving the knife to you. It's just a good precaution to take."

"I see . . . thank you Granger," Daphne said after a moment, "I was unaware of all that."

"My parents are dentists," Hermione said as she carefully bandaged the other girl's cut, "better?"

"Can't you use a healing charm?"

"My parents are the health care professionals," Hermione replied flatly, "what I know about healing could fill a thimble."

"An area of knowledge that the Great Granger doesn't know about?" Tracy laughed, she carefully cleaned the blade and handed it to one of the Patil twins. "Will wonders never cease?"

"I know enough about most subjects to do well in classes," Hermione said calmly, "outside of classes my real interest lies in History . . . not healing. As we don't have a class in healing, I haven't done too much research."

"We're all finished," Padma said as she finished signing her name.

"Let me see that for a moment please," Hermione asked. She took a few seconds to examine the paper. "Fine."

"Well?" Daphne demanded.

"Voldemort is smart," Hermione began, "or has someone working for him with more than two brain cells to rub together."

"So?"

"So they aren't putting privacy charms on the messages that they're sending to Draco," Hermione said with a smile, "they're encoding them. The problem with a code is that . . ."

"It can be broken," Parvati said, "right?"

"Yes," Hermione agreed, "get a way to copy the messages without the other side knowing and you can sometimes get a lot of valuable intelligence . . . and quite a bit of useless drivel."

"Unless there's another code that you're missing," Daphne pointed out.

"Yes," Hermione agreed, "unless that."

"So what's your offer Granger?" Daphne demanded.

"The both of you swear a pact of everlasting friendship and support with House Granger," Hermione said calmly, "in the old forms."

"So the muggleborn wants to become a proper pureblood?" Daphne asked with a smirk.

"The muggleborn wants to help her friend Harry and this will allow me to do that," Hermione snapped, "the fact that I could use this as a path to political power and social acceptance disgusts me as does the whole sick pureblood society."

"Glad you got that off your chest then," Tracy offered, "what are the terms of your offer?"

"I have them written up here," Hermione said quickly.

"Nothing too arduous," Daphne said slowly, "though I am a bit leery of this clause that says we must service Potter every second Tuesday of every month . . ."

"I rather liked that one myself," Tracy said with a grin, "he may be scrawny but he seems like he'd be . . . ah . . . enthusiastic."

"What?" Hermione squawked, she ripped the paper out of the other girl's hands and scanned through it for a couple minutes. "I don't see anything like that in here."

"That's because there isn't," Daphne replied, "I wanted to confirm that you were as trusting as the rumors stated you were."

"It's something we'll have to work on," Tracy agreed

"Laugh all you want," Hermione grumbled, "we still have the hard part."

"And what, pray tell, is the hard part?" Daphne asked mildly.

"Convincing Harry to help with all this," Hermione replied, "all he wants is to be left alone."

"Sounds like he'll absolutely hate all this then," Daphne offered.

"Good luck, Granger." Tracy added.

"What part do you want us to play in all this, Hermione?" Parvati asked.

"I was hoping that you'd be willing to join my . . . uh . . ."

"Coalition," Daphne suggested.

"Yes," Hermione agreed, "thank you."

IIIIIIIIII

Hermine caught Harry on his way back from Quidditch Practice and dragged him into the classroom they'd been using.

"What's this about?" Harry asked mildly.

"Granger needs your help to become a pureblood," Daphne replied.

"What?" Harry looked at his friend oddly. "Why would you want to do that?"

"It'll help with Voldemort," Hermione explained.

"What do I have to do?" Harry asked.

"Just sign this contract," Hermione said quickly, "it outlines the your rights and responsibilities to House Granger and outlines house Grangers responsibilities to you."

"Alright." Harry squinted at the document. "What language is this?"

"Latin," Tracy replied, "you don't speak it?"

"Not even a little," Harry said cheerfully.

"Let me see it," Daphne commanded. After a quick scan she picked up her wand. "I Daphne Greengrass swear on my magic that there is nothing in here that would harm Harry Potter in any way. Happy?"

"Relieved," Harry said, "where do I sign?"

"Right here," Hermione indicated the spot.

Harry signed his name with a flourish and turned to the two Slytherins.

"You said it outlined my rights and responsibilities," Harry began.

"Yes," Daphne agreed, "why?"

"What's that mean?" Harry asked in confusion.

"Greengrass and Davis are subordinate houses to the Granger family," Daphne explained, "though the terms are fairly reasonable. I think the most arduous thing we'd have to do is let her stay with us for as long as she wanted."

"Where does it say that?" Hermione asked.

"The perpetual shelter and sanctuary part of it," Tracy said. She scanned the contract until she found the relevant portion. "Here, see?"

"Oh," Hermione said dumbly.

"It gets complicated if Granger dies," Daphne continued, "especially if a member of either the Davis or Greengrass families had something to do with it."

"What happens then?" Harry asked.

"We become House Potter's chattel," Daphne said calmly, "if our families had something to do with it. Not so bad if we didn't."

"What," Hermione screamed, "I didn't put that in!"

"It's right here," Tracy sighed, "didn't you look at this contract?"

"I copied it out of a book," Hermione said defensively, "but I didn't think it meant any of that."

"It's fairly clear about what it says," Tracy said with a frown, "not even any obscuring language."

"Let me see that," Hermione demanded. She squinted at the document for a few minutes as she tried to puzzle out the words.

"Don't speak Latin?" Daphne asked with a grin.

"No," Hermione admitted. "Not well enough for this anyway. I stopped studying it so much after I realized how little it helped with our incantations."

"If you don't speak Latin, then why in the seven hells did you write out a contract in Latin?"

"The book said I had to," Hermione replied hotly.

"Let me see that book," Daphne commanded. She flipped through it. "You do realize that this book is over a hundred years old, right?"

"It was the newest one I could find in the library," Hermione said weakly.

"Well it's outdated," Daphne said, "and whoever wrote it didn't know Latin much better than you do. It's filled with mistranslations."

"So I didn't use the right contract?"

"The contract is fine," Tracy spoke up, "so long as you don't mind being subordinate to House Potter."

"You need a pureblood sponsor along with your two pureblood client houses for this one to work," Daphne added, "Tracy and I are your clients. Potter is your sponsor."

"Just like Crabbe and Goyle are clients to Malfoy," Tracy added, "forget who the sponsor was."

"What's that all mean?"

"Whatever Harry and you decide it means," Tracy said with a shrug, "standard is that he offers protection and you offer support."

"Oh."

"You're also going to have to stay with this whole outdated thing," Tracy added, "it was out of style when this book was written and it's unheard of now."

"But I thought . . . the book said . . ." Hermione stammered. "How was I supposed to do it then if not this way?"

"You call a solicitor and tell them what you want, they send you a bill."

"That's it?"

"Yup."

"So all the complex spell work . . ."

"You normally just get it notarized now a days."



"How is it enforced then?"

"You still use magic, just not this kind."

AN: Just an idea I had sitting around. Polish by dogbertcarroll.

Omake by fenriswolf001

"My parents are dentists," Hermione said as she carefully bandaged the other girl's cut, "better?"

"What's a 'dentist'?" Parvati asked with a frown, dental care having been taken care of in the magical world with simple charms for centuries.

"A dentist makes their living by pulling out people's teeth," Hermione answered absently as she finished scourging the knife.

"Oh, WOW," the other girls breathed, childhood tales of Evil Muggles and their torture devices recalled to memory. Hermione's status at having such dangerous parents went up several notches, especially with the Slytherins.

## March or Die

Time seemed to stop as he watched her body, it was so still and his heart shattered as he realized what that must mean ... his best friend was dead. Neville ran over to check but was cut down before he could confirm what Harry already knew. Harry watched as his friends fell one by one until he couldn't take it any longer.

The assorted combatants froze as an agonizing scream that spoke of never ending sorrow echoed across the battle field, as one they turned to face the source and beheld the boy who lived, the hope of many slump in defeat. The dark cheers of Voldemort's followers cut off when the dejected figure of the Boy who Lived straightened his stance shifting it from abject and total despair to something else, something more dangerous. To those watching his every movement screamed of his new purpose, his only reason to remain in the land of the living... revenge.

Harry didn't seem to care about the curses being flung his way, didn't even try to dodge as hex after hex impacted on his battered body. Ignoring his wounds, he went through the assembled Death Eaters, killing them one by one until only their leader remained.

The Dark Lord Voldemort paled as he watched his young nemesis approach. For the first time since he'd been a small boy in the orphanage, the Dark Lord felt fear. Too late he learned the lesson that no matter how much power you acquire, there will always be someone better and there was no doubt in Tom's mind that his death was written in Harry's killing curse eyes.

From her place on the side lines, Tonks watched in awe as the Dark Lord met his end and for the first time she understood what one of her instructors had tried to explain. He'd told them that they must never get into a fight with someone who has nothing to loose, with someone who has lost everything and has nothing left in the world then to spread the pain that they feel.

Tonks shuddered as she watched 'the-boy-who-lived' finish off his opponent. She wanted to go over, to comfort the boy and tell him that all would be fine but she couldn't. Her body betrayed her and she

could not muster up the will to leave her place of safety and approach the boy that screamed danger to her finely honed senses.

Harry looked down at Voldemort's body, feeling strangely empty. He didn't understand the emptiness at first. He'd grown up without friends hadn't he, why should their sudden loss affect him so much? Unbidden, the thought that one does not know what one has until it is lost echoed through his mind. Harry knew that he couldn't go back to a life of solitude, not after experiencing the joys of companionship. He didn't even consider finding new friends, it would be like betraying those he had led to their deaths.

With a sob, Harry cast down his wand and took up the one of his defeated nemesis. It just didn't feel right to carry Holly, not after what he'd done.

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Amelia arrived twenty minutes later to find the ministry in chaos. Rumors filled the air as everyone tried to make sense of what had happened.

"Out of my way," Amelia growled as she cut through the crowd. The field Aurors on the scene immediately led her to the cordoned area where the Dark Lord had made his last stand. "Where's Potter," Amelia asked in a low tone.

"No one knows," the field Auror admitted, "blood trail leads to the floor room. He could be anywhere . . . we . . . we don't know why he left ma'am."

"Same reason a wounded animal crawls off," Amelia replied, "to die . . . do we have a trace on him?"

"We did," the Auror said slowly, "but we lost it before it could tell us anything."

"Mark him missing and presumed dead," Amelia said unemotionally.

"Understood Chief."

"Who else did we loose?"

"Not a single death on the side of the angels Chief," the Auror said quickly, "touch and go with some of the kids for a while but they all pulled through."

"That's something anyway," Amelia sighed, "round up the press. Tell them I'm going to make a statement."

|||||||

Harry woke up in a strange place feeling better then he had in years. The weight of what had happened fell upon him as he remembered what had happened.

"How did I . . . Fawkes?" Harry asked.

Dumbledore's Phoenix crooned at him, confirming that he'd had a hand in the boy's miraculous recovery.

"You shouldn't have saved me Fawkes," Harry said in a dull tone, "at least then I'd have been with my friends again."

The Phoenix drooped a bit at the boy's statement. He could heal the boy's physical scars but he'd never be able to cure the child's emotional torments.

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It was a broken man who approached the legion recruiter, he had heard that the legion was a good place to forget, a good place to disappear, a good place to die. The legion sergeant behind the counter had seen many such men, men who had lost all reason to live

And after the barrage of tests he was given a simple choice between taking a normal five year contract and something special, a two year contract but of course their was a catch. The recruiter went on to explain that if he chose to take the second option, he would receive

his training from a series of pensive and after absorbing the memories and skills of a dozen legionaries, veterans of some of the legion's bloodiest campaigns. Then, provided he was able to survive the experience with his sanity intact he would then be given an astonishing variety of potions, the first series of potions integrated the foreign made the foreign memories taken from the pensive indistinguishable from his own, the second series instilled the reflexes and the muscle memory to insure the skills could be used. And finally the last dozen or so gave him the strength and stamina needed to be one of the legions elite, the first to fight, the first to die. Without hesitation the young boy made his choice, and with that choice disappeared from the wizarding world.

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As Hermione awoke she became conscious of a presence beside her bed, looking she saw the dejected form of Dobby, the small house elf straightened as he noticed her gaze, a trembling arm rose to wipe the tears and his eyes were filled with uncertainty as he turned to speak with her.

"Dobby can not find Harry Potter sir, nothing can hide a master from his house elf but Dobby can find his Harry Potter, Dobby knows that Harry Potter is alive but he can not find Harry Potter sir. Dobby is afraid miss Hermi, Dobby is very afraid."

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Legion Compound Somewhere in Africa: 19 Months Later

Bill looked out across the camp, eyes squinting due to the harshness of the African sun. His work at Gringotts had once again taken him to the Dark Continent, this time to assist in the removal of several curses from the tomb of an obscure chieftain in order to recover several scrolls of ancient knowledge believed to be hidden within.

The influence that Bill's superiors and the importance of his mission was evidenced by the escort to be provided by the commander of the local detachment la Legion Etrangere, better known by English speakers as the French Foreign Legion. His meeting with the Legion

Commander, Colonel Dubois had been brief. Upon his entrance to the man's office he had received some disturbing news.

"I am afraid that due to the recent difficulties I cannot spare the men that you were promised, what I can spare is one platoon, due to the danger it will be accompanied by one of my best men."

Bill was dumbfounded, no one had told him that things had gotten so bad that only a handful of men could be spared. Bill took a deep breath, he had faced danger before in his career as a curse breaker and he would likely face it again.

"If things have gotten that bad then you may as well keep your men," Bill said in a firm voice, "I'll travel faster alone anyway. If everything goes well then it wouldn't matter either way, if worse comes to worse . . . well, what can one man do?"

"What can one man do?" The old campaigner laughed. The Colonel turned away his eyes unfocused as if reviewing a memory. "You don't know Lieutenant Riddle, or you would never have made that comment Mr. Weasley, I've seen him do things that no other man could have accomplished." The Colonel's eyes refocused as he once again focused on his present company. "In any case he would insist on going if he received some indication of the danger, and he would be quite annoyed to be kept from it, my aid is waiting outside and he will take you to the security detail." With that the man turned away, once again lost in past memories.

Bill nodded at the man's implied dismissal and made his way to the outer office where a man that he presumed was the colonel's aid was waiting.

"Mr. Weasley I presume," the man said with a smile, "do you have any orders to pass on to me?"

"Yes, the Colonel says that you are to take me to the men responsible for the security."

"That would be Charlie Company second platoon sir." Replied the young Lieutenant, "they are in the barracks just past the parade ground, won't take us but a minute to get there."

"One other thing Lieutenant, the Colonel also mentioned that a man named Lt. Riddle would also be accompanying us." Bill watched bemused as the young officer's face turned an interesting shade of white.

"I will see that he is informed sir" adding hesitantly "good luck sir, if Lt. Riddle is to accompany you then you will need it." The young man managed to stammer, before setting off at a brisk pace. It didn't take long for the duo to reach the barracks where the men were billeted, upon their arrival the young Lieutenant turned to face his charge, "Here we are sir, just enter and identify yourself to the men inside and they will insure that you are prepared for your journey into the bush, I will insure that Lt. Riddle is informed of his role." The young man started off before pausing abruptly to consider something, "Once more sir, I must advise you to be careful, when you accompany The Plague into hell, it is best that you maintain vigilance." Without explaining his last comment the Lieutenant left behind a very confused member of the Weasley clan.

"What are you doing here?" A grizzled old NCO demanded after he'd noticed that Bill was in his area.

"The Colonel's aide brough me here," Bill replied, "I'm supposed to be meeting my escort."

"Ah," the NCO said in understanding, "I know who you are now. Sergeant Chef McCoy," the man introduced himself.

"Good to meet you Sergeant Chef McCoy."

"Likewise. Best get your things laid out early sir," the NCO advised. "We're leaving early." He glanced down at his watch. "Later today."

"Right," Bill agreed. "One thing Sergeant, before the Colonel's aide left he mentioned something along the lines of being careful of The Plague in hell, could you explain to me what he meant?"

“He was warning ye’ lad,” holding a hand up to forestall comment, the old noncom continued “Under this command there is a young man named Lieutenant Marvlo Riddle and he is the single most dangerous individual that I have ever met.” Motioning towards one of the bunks and sitting on the adjoining bunk the old NCO continued “and he has been gifted with the nick name The Plague, comes from a comment someone made to the effect that ‘he’s the one man in the world that has more kills then The Plague’ and the hell the Colonel’s aide mentioned was short for ‘The Green Hell’ it’s what many of the men call the place that we are going, in short he was trying to warn you about going anywhere with Lt. Riddle, because you can be sure that anywhere that Lt. Riddle goes will be the most dangerous place around.”

“Really? Bill was intrigued. “Who is this Lt. Riddle, what sort of man is he,” Bill inquired.

“Well.” Sergeant McCoy paused to formulate his response, “That is not the sort of question that one asks in the Legion, that being said no one knows, the most popular theory is that he is an ex-Death Eater who joined the Legion after the fall of the Dark Lord so that he could continue killing without fear of reprisal.” He paused to consider this, “Me, I don’t believe it and I should know, before I joined the Legion I was an Auror. I fought in the first war with the dark lord and when it ended I found myself without a job, a family, or a place to live. Peace was the cause of the first, and the war was the cause of the last two so believe me when I tell you that Lieutenant Riddle was never a Death Eater, he wouldn’t have lasted more then five minutes before he tried to kill the Dark Lord and that would have quickly ended either the Lieutenants life, or the Dark Lord’s and since the Lieutenant is both alive and since the dark lord was not killed by a man named Riddle.” He trailed off, “what I do know is that he is a two year man at the end of his contract, you see most of us start our careers in the Legion on normal five year contracts, a few like Riddle chose to sign up for two and the Legion does like to get it’s money’s worth so to speak, normally you spend six months to a year in a hostile area before being rotated out, two year men never get rotated out, they go where the fighting is and stay until it cools down, then they are sent to



some other bush war. No rest, no garrison duty, what this all means that he has survived almost two years of constant conflict.”

“I suppose that all this would make a very dangerous man.” Bill added, A loud snort suggested a different opinion.

“No, what makes him a ‘very dangerous man’ is his ability to kill without hesitation, and that’s not something you can learn, you got to be born with it.” Standing the old NCO added one more pearl of advice, “while you are with us you will hear a lot of stories, I’ll trust you to take them with a grain of salt, get some sleep sir we have to leave early tomorrow morning.”

Watching the retreating back of the grizzled old soldier Bill couldn’t help but wonder what his willingness to accept danger as a normal part of his career had gotten him into. Resolving to think more on it at the conclusion of his assignment, Bill organized his things before laying down to rest.

Bill awoke early the next morning filled with a rush of anticipation, finally he was to do what they'd brought him to Africa to do and the thought that his long wait was coming to an end brought a sharp smile to his face. The harsh metallic taste of adrenalin flooded his mouth and made it impossible to reenter the land of dreams.

Deciding to burn off his excess energy with preparation he gathered his belongings and so as to not disturb the rest of the men who were to be his guards and traveling companions, stepped out of the barracks and onto the parade ground. There stood the scrawniest man he had yet seen in the uniform of a Legionnaire, he appeared to be engaged in the same task as Bill, making his preparations in a location which would not disturb his comrades. Subjecting the man to his scrutiny Bill noticed a uniform faded and mussed, boots devoid of polish, all this was topped off with a wide brimmed hat which looked absurd on such a small frame. Shaking his head in wonder Bill sent a small prayer to the patron of new troops that this wretched figure has time to correct his appearance before being observed by one of the many non commissioned officers in the area. Shaking his head in wonder Bill turned his attention to the man’s features, beholding a face darkened by repeated exposure to the harsh African sun, and

hands callused by years of hard labor. Then, as if sensing the scrutiny the man looked up from his preparation exposing Bill to the full weight of his stare, of his eyes, the eyes of a killer of a man who could and would take life without one ounce of hesitation or remorse. It seemed that at last, Bill had met the notorious Lt. Riddle.

“Good morning, I am Bill Weasley, the curse breaker that Gringotts sent.” Bill extended his hand in greeting.

“Lieutenant Marvlo Riddle,” without so much as a glance toward the extended hand the man rasped his reply.

Nonplussed, bill lowered his hand and continued, “Yes, well I was wondering if you would be willing to offer any advice as to what I should pack for our trek through the jungle?”

“Hot sauce,” Lieutenant Riddle hissed in reply”

“Hot sauce?” Repeated the bewildered Gringotts employee.

“Just try eating a human heart without hot sauce. Sure cooking them over hot coals will also improve the flavor, but in my experience you can’t usually risk a fire when out in the field, so I recommend that you bring a bottle of hot sauce with you. You’ll thank me when you eat your first heart.”

Bill’s laugh of appreciation trailed off when he noticed no glint of humor in the eyes of his battle scared companion.

In the hour before dawn broke the rest of the security detail assembled and the first rays of sunlight crested the horizon they started off into the jungle, into the Green Hell. Lieutenant Riddle was in the lead and as the rest of the column stopped for lunch he continued, scouting for danger. After lunch it took them two hours to catch up to Lt. Riddle, they found him sitting in the shade of a large tree licking the last bits of his meal off of the tips of his fingers, their relief at finding the young officer quickly turned, weariness as they noticed the corpse at his feet.

“Sniper” Lt. Riddle’s voice startled them, “their will be more of them ahead.” With that he stood and walked once more into the jungle.

Bill watched as two of the men turned over the dead sniper, his curiosity quickly turned to horror when he noticed a large bloody hole in the man’s chest, apparently Lt. Riddle had not been kidding about the hot sauce.

Ahead, 'Riddle' smirked as the sound of a man getting violently sick reached him. It was a prank that never got old, they always checked the body but they never checked the bushes next to it for the missing heart, the marauders would have been proud of him and the one trace of humanity he allowed himself to keep.

Several hours later they halted for the night and made camp, talk quickly turned to the mysterious Lt. Riddle. “He’s a murderer from one of the pure blood families, on the run from the law when they found out about his hobby and he came here so he wouldn’t have to give it up” quipped one legionnaire.

“You got it all wrong” said another “he’s immortal, he’s been fighting for so long that he’s just good at it now.” Derisive laughter met this one.

“What do you know, not what you suspect but what do you know?” Asked Bill eager to learn more about what the strange Lieutenant was like.

Silence greeted his question until finally, hesitantly a scared Corporal opened his mouth. “What he’s like’ is not easy to explain, I saw him fight once, he had a giant grin on his face like there was no where on earth that he would rather be than in the midst of a slaughter, ‘what he’s like’ is the scariest man I have ever seen in seven years of legion service. You men get some sleep we have a long day tomorrow.”

It was mid-afternoon before they reached the tomb of the unknown chief, Immediately Bill set to work, the curses were unfamiliar but soon broke before his skill and they had soon recovered the scrolls.

The return to the compound had so far proved to be far easier than the journey to the tomb, the men began to relax as the final leg of the journey neared its completion. The sense of peace was not to last. The first shots rang out when they were no more than a league away from the safety of the Legion compound and it quickly became apparent that they were both outnumbered and outgunned.

As the sounds of battle raged Bill observed Lt. Riddle running towards the melee ordering the retreat, wand in hand he fought a desperate rear guard action. While Lt. Riddle made his stand the remainder of the column made for the safety of the camp over the next ridge. As Bill fled towards the camp he swore to himself that should he survive the next twenty four hours he would return to England he would die on the soil of his birth and not in some stinking jungle, he would return home and never embark on so perilous a mission for the rest of his days. As they ran they could hear in the distance laughter drowning out the sounds of battle, the laughter of a man with nothing to lose the demented laughter of a man forsaken by the gods themselves.

It was dark before the tattered remains of the expedition reached the safety of the camp. While most of the men were content to fall into their bunks and thank any deity that was listening that they had made it through another day, Bill immediately sought out the camp's commander.

"Colonel you must immediately send out a rescue mission, Lt. Riddle is still out there."

"No, not while it's dark, I cannot justify the risk for just one man. We shall just hope that Lt. Riddle can hold out until morning." Slowly the Colonel shook his head.

Bill was shocked, where was the vaunted loyalty to their own that characterized most military units. The chance of finding Riddle alive was small enough if they left now and if they should wait till morning ... heart heavy he resolved to break his earlier oath and accompany the next day's expedition he decided that the least that he could do was preside over the burial of the man who saved his life.

Lt. Riddle was in his element, the only place where he felt alive was when he was closest to death. They came by the dozens it seemed as if they were eager to die; it was a wish he was all too happy to grant. Time lost all meaning and the small clearing where he had chosen to make his stand became his entire world and after an indeterminate amount of time they stopped coming. There surrounded by his victims Lt. Riddle dropped to his knees and cried, he knew that the injuries he had taken would not be serious enough to allow him to die, he knew that he would be denied their presence for another day.

They left early the next day and it was slow going to the location where they had earlier been ambushed, the men checking every step of the trail for mines before continuing. The smell hit them long before they were able to see the scene of the previous day's carnage. The ground was covered with corpses like some horrible scene of hell, and there in the center of it all lay Lt. Riddle the bodies of his adversary's surrounding him like some sort of macabre ring of death. Till his dying day Bill would remember the scene with horror, and it wasn't the blood and the death that shocked him; it was the intense look of disappointment on the young man's face.

"What kind of man shows joy in battle and sorrow in peace?" Bill's voice startled his companions. Silence greeted his question as the men placed the injured Lieutenant on a stretcher and took him back to camp.

Bill's return to England was met with much fanfare and as he stepped off the apparition point he was met by Headmaster Dumbledore and his girlfriend Fleur as well as the entire Weasley clan, Ron and Ginny having taken leave of their studies to greet their older brother upon his return from his harrowing adventure. Tears trickled down his cheeks as one simple fact penetrated his troubled mind, he had survived the green hell and made it home, gathering his loved ones in his arms he wept thanking all that was holy that he could feel them in his arms again.

AN: It's been waiting to be finished but I don't think that's going to happen any time soon. Next part would have Bill talking about what

happened and someone telling Dumbledore about a killer with Voldemort's old name.

Disclaimer: We're the Double Mint twins . . .

## Double Your Pleasure

Harry sighed when Parvati gave an exaggerated sniff of disdain as she walked past. He supposed he couldn't blame her, not after the way he'd treated her at the dance.

"Parvati," Harry called out as he ran after the girl, "wait."

"What is it?" the girl hissed.

"I just wanted to tell you how sorry I am that I ruined your dance," Harry gasped.

"Go on," the girl said neutrally.

"It was my first dance and being with a witch as pretty as you . . ."

"You think I'm pretty?" she interrupted.

"Very," Harry agreed with a deep red blush.

"Alright," she said suddenly, "I accept your apology."

"Thank you," Harry said in relief.

"On one condition," she added.

"What is it?" Harry asked nervously.

"You have to agree to take me on another date to make up for that one," she explained, "if you take me on a good date . . ."

"Then you'll forgive me?" Harry asked hopefully.

"Then we'll go on more of them," she giggled, "okay?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed brightly.

She turned and began sashaying away.

"Wait," he called out.

"What is it?"

"Do you know where your sister is?"

"Why do you want her?"

"Ron's never going to admit that he did anything wrong," Harry stammered, "and I am his best mate so I thought . . . that is to say . . ."

"I'll be sure to tell her for you than," she offered, "thank you again Harry."

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Hermione was in the library when she saw Ron. That was her first clue that something was wrong, coincidentally enough it was also the first time that Ron had gone to the library without being coerced in some way.

"Hermione." Ron looked like he hadn't slept for a week. "Can . . . can we talk?"

"Sure," she said slowly, "what do you need?"

"In private," he added.

"Of course, Ron." Hermione was starting to get worried about her friend. "Let's go find an empty classroom."

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Hedwig was an exceedingly clever Owl. Still, she was just a bird, and so it wasn't surprising that it took her several years to figure out why she kept being forced to endure several long months in the land of no bacon every year. This would have to change, the old fool would get



one warning and then . . . well, he'd learn just why owls were at the top of the food chain.

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Parvati walked into an unused classroom for a meeting with her twin.

"Anything happen that I should know about?" she asked her sister as they changed robes.

"Harry had a very nice apology for you," Padma announced as she walked up to her sister, "sounded like he'd been practicing it for hours."

"Oh?"

"Said being around such a pretty witch made him nervous."

"How sweet," Parvati sighed, "what did you tell him?"

"That he owed another date to make up for the bad one and that if it were good enough then several more would follow."

"Did he say anything else?"

"Apologized to me for Ron's behavior and noted that it was unlikely that the ponce would give us one himself," she added, "I thought that it was quite sweet of him."

"I agree."

"And I hesitate to bring this up, but . . . well . . ."

"Yes?"

"We share everything else, and he really is a sweet boy."

"Much better than the usual dregs," her sister agreed, "and it allows us to continue switching places."

"Would be a shame to discard the reason we had the hat place us into separate houses," she mused, "not like those brain dead Weasley twins."

"Someone needs to sit them down and explain what subtlety is."

"Typical Gryffindors."

"True."

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Hermione sat Ron down in one of the empty study rooms and gave him her most sympathetic look. The one she'd practiced in the mirror to use when Harry lost the tournament if the fool boy didn't think survival was reason enough to celebrate, this seemed like a good time to test it.

"What's wrong?" she prompted gently.

"I . . . I ate a piece of quiche by mistake at the ball," Ron sobbed, "I thought it was pie."

"And . . ." Hermione looked at him oddly.

"And that means I'm gay doesn't it?" Ron replied.

"Eating quiche doesn't make you gay," Hermione said with a long suffering sigh.

"But I liked it," Ron protested, "and the twins said . . ."

"You believed something the twins said?" Hermione asked incredulously.

"No," Ron replied, "I believed the exact opposite of what they told me."

"Look, Ron . . . I like quiche. Does that make me gay too?"

"You're a girl," Ron replied, "so it doesn't count. I'm not sure what the rules are for girls."

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Hedwig was an apex predator, master of all she surveyed. Sure some said that humans were at the top, Hedwig scoffed at the notion, hadn't she befriended the most powerful of their kind? Didn't he give her offerings of bacon every morning? Hedwig's head bobbed in satisfaction, her logic was impeccable.

Hedwig sailed into the Headmaster's office through an open window and dropped a 'warning' on the man's desk.

"Chirp?" Fawkes chirped quizzically, unwisely drawing her attention.

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Ron sighed, this was the hardest thing he had ever done.

"Hey Malfoy, got a minute?"

"What do you want weasel?" Draco sneered.

"I was just wondering, is there a membership card or something?"

"For what?" Draco asked condescendingly.

"For being gay," Ron explained, "you're the only gay guy I know and . . ."

"What do you mean gay?" Draco whined. "Haven't you seen me with Pansy?"

"And as beards go, yours could use a bit of work since she's practically a boy." Ron sighed. "About that membership card . . ."

"What makes you think I'm gay?" Draco demanded shrilly.

"Well." Ron held up a finger. "To start with, there's all the time you spend on your hair."

"I like to look my best," Draco protested.

"The way you seem to spend all your time with a couple of strapping young lads." Ron held up another finger.

"They're there for my protection," Draco tried to explain.

"Uh huh, then there's the way . . ."

Ten minutes and several hands full of fingers later...

"I always figured you had a thing for Harry, what with the way you always insisted on showing up in our compartment at the beginning of each year and all."

"Certainly not!" a confused and slightly worried Draco replied. "I mean sure he has beautiful eyes, but he's a half blood and look at his hair! I could never be with someone who took so little care of their hair," Draco protested, "and I'm not gay," he finished with the last said almost as a question.

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Parvati giggled at the look of concentration on Harry's face. It was obvious that he was trying his best, it was equally obvious that the boy had no idea what he was supposed to do on a date.

"I'll be right back, Harry," Parvati giggled.

"And I'll be waiting for you," Harry promised with such conviction that his magic formed a small halo around him signifying he'd just performed a magical vow.

She ducked into the bathroom and found her twin checking her appearance in the mirror.

"How's the date going?" Padma asked.

"Wonderful," Parvati replied, "he really is a great guy."

"He's just clueless-

"-awkward-

"-and unlucky," Padma finished. "Care to switch?" she added hopefully.

"Okay," Parvati agreed. A couple practiced flicks of their wand changed their house colors and hairstyles. "How do I look?"

"Studios, and me?"

"Ravishing."

"Wonderful."

"Pad."

"Yeah?"

"Dibs on kissing him first," Parvati said firmly, "okay?"

"Okay," Padma agreed, "it's only fair."

IIIIIIII

Hermione looked up when she noticed a great disturbance of the Common Room peace.

"What kind of a girl do you think I am?" Lavender screamed. She pulled back her arm and slapped Ron across the face. "Honestly."

"What did you do, Ron?" Hermione asked with a long suffering sigh.

"I just asked her for some tips," Ron said in an injured tone.

"On what?"

"Well, there's a note on the wall of the bathroom that says Lavender gives the best . . ."

"That's enough," Hermione said quickly, "I get the picture."

"So . . ."

"So Lavender's not that kind of girl and neither am I," Hermione said firmly, "understand?"

"Yeah," Ron agreed glumly, wondering if Malfoy had any tips he'd care to share, even if he did seem to be in denial.

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Harry smiled when his date returned, his smile became strained when he realized that he had no idea how he was supposed to greet a girl after she returned from a trip to the lavatory.

"Er . . . um . . . you look nice," Harry mumbled.

"Thank you, Harry."

"Did . . ."

"Yes?" she prompted.

"Did you do something with your hair when you were gone?" he ventured.

"Why do you ask?"

"Just felt like there was something different about you," Harry said with a frown.

"Yeah," she agreed quickly, "I changed my hair."

"Oh, looks nice."

"I'm glad you approve," she murmured in relief, "thank you for noticing."

|||||

Dumbledore returned to his office to find the most mysterious mystery since the Chamber of Secrets had been opened two years prior.

"How in the world did a rabbit's head end up on my desk?" Dumbledore muttered to himself. The head in question came from an older rabbit if the long grey fur was any indication, another odd thing about it was the crude 'u' scratched into its forehead. "And who would fill my lemon drop bowl with owl pellets?" he shook his head. "Students and their pranks I suppose." He turned to his familiar. "Did you see anything, Fawkes?"

The phoenix in question just shook his head in denial.

"Fawkes!?" 'How on earth does a phoenix get a black eye?' It was the first time Dumbledore could remember seeing a visible injury on his companion. "What happened to you?"

"Chirp," Fawkes replied before putting his head under his wing.

"Ran into a door knob?" Dumbledore muttered in disbelief.

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Hermione looked up as an owl wearing a leather gimp mask flew in and dropped something onto Ron's lap.

"What's that, Ron?" Hermione asked.

"My copy of 'PegBoys Quarterly,' it's got a special article on dealing with splinters."

"Honestly," she groaned, "I've told you . . ." she sighed, "just let me do some research, okay?"

"HmMMM?" Ron was so engrossed in his reading that he hadn't heard a word the girl had said. "Sure, Hermione, whatever you say."

"Really?" Hermione asked. She'd been expecting an argument.

"Yeah," Ron agreed, "you're my sidekick, so whatever you want."

"What do you mean by that?" Hermione demanded.

"It says here that all gay guys have a female sidekick." Ron pointed to the column he was reading. "We'll get an apartment after we graduate and we'll cry on each other's shoulders when our relationships fail . . . er . . . something wrong, Hermione?"

IIIIIIII

Harry fed Hedwig another owl treat as he finished giving her an update of what had happened to his life. He often came up to speak with Hedwig, she was after all the one being he trusted with his secrets, the one being he knew would never betray him.

"Thanks for listening, girl."

Hedwig's eyes narrowed as her human walked away. He'd told her his hopes, his dreams, about his new girlfriend. What he hadn't told her was that they weren't going to the land of no bacon that year. Obviously her warning had been ignored, obviously she'd have to dispose of the old fool.

IIIIIIII

Padma and Parvati switched back into their robes and apprised their twin of how they'd spent the day.

"Planning anything later today?"

"No, why?"



"I told Harry that I'd try to get my sister to help him find a solution to the second task," she explained, "I'm fairly sure that Hermione is already in."

"Of course," she agreed, "he is our boyfriend after all."

|||||

Hermione was already in the library when Harry arrived and the Patil twins joined them a few minutes later.

"Thanks for helping me find a solution," Harry said to the three girls, "it really means a lot to me."

"Of course I'd help you," Hermione said hotly, "you're my best friend."

"Of course we'd help you," Parvati laughed. "You're our boyfriend . . . er, I mean my boyfriend," she quickly corrected as all three witches blushed.

"You're dating my sister," Padma agreed, "and I'm happy to lend a hand."

|||||

Albus smiled as Ron took a seat next to his father.

"I understand that the two of you have some personal issues you need to discuss," Albus said with a grin.

"Yes, Headmaster Dumbledore," Arthur agreed.

"Then I would be delighted if you could make some use of the conference room."

"That will be wonderful, thank you again, Headmaster."

"Not at all, I'm happy to help." Dumbledore waved them through a doorway that they'd have both sworn had not been there before and

into a large room. "Why don't I just leave you two alone?" he suggested. "Just call for one of the elves when you'd like to leave."

Ron turned to his father and took a deep breath. "What is it you want to talk with me about, dad?"

"I just wanted to tell you that it's okay to experiment while you're in school," Arthur assured his son, "that's what being in school is for." He looked around to make doubly sure that there were no portraits listening. "Why," he lowered his voice, "I tried quiche myself when I was your age."

"Really?" Ron asked.

"Tried it more than once," Arthur continued. "But that's not what I wanted to tell you."

"It isn't?"

"No, Ron . . . Son." Arthur sighed, "you eat whatever kind of food makes you happy. No matter what happens, you'll still be my son."

"Thanks, dad."

"Unless you become a fan of the Wasps, then I'm disowning you."

"I'm a Cannons man through and through," he said hotly. "Thanks for the talk, dad."

"Anytime, son."

IIIIIIII

The Headmaster and Deputy Headmistress were taking their weekly stroll around the grounds when a large piece of masonry narrowly missed the Headmaster's skull and buried itself deeply into the turf.

"My word," McGonagall gasped, "are you injured, Albus?"

"No," Dumbledore replied, "I'm quite alright . . . please make a note to have the castle checked, Minerva."

"Of course," she agreed, "imagine if that had hit one of the children."

Above them, resting on the ramparts, Hedwig glared down. The old fool had gotten lucky, but she'd win in the end. He had to be lucky every time, she just needed to be lucky once.

"Prick," Hedwig barked. Time to think up another plan.

IIIIIIII

Ron ran into the library and flopped into a seat next to his sidekick Hermione.

"Sorry I'm late," Ron said as he plopped into the chair, "but I had to . . ." he trailed off when he noticed the glares being directed at him from the twin witches, "do something I'm not finished doing," he said lamely, "so I can't help for more than a few minutes."

It didn't take more than five minutes of having to endure the Patil twins' poisonous glares before Ron broke.

"Look at the time," he laughed nervously, "gotta go. Bye, Harry."

"Later," Harry said absently, "you guys find anything?"

"What about this charm?" Parvati called out, her mood much better now that the ginger headed moron was gone. "It creates a large bubble to float up to the surface."

"Which neatly takes care of half your trip into the lake," Padma said enthusiastically.

"What book are you looking at?" Hermione asked.

"One of the ones I borrowed from the Common Room," Parvati replied, "why?"

"You have books in your common room?" Hermione demanded.

"Several," Parvati agreed, "why do you ask?"

"May I have a look?" Hermione asked hopefully. Damn it, she never should have asked the hat to put her in Gryffindor. If only she'd known that Ravenclaw had their own library filled with rare tomes.

|||||||

Dumbledore's eyes swept over the cheering crowd. With a smile, he cleared his throat and began to speak.

"May I have your attention please," Dumbledore called out, "the second task of the . . ." Dumbledore cut off when a crossbow bolt appeared out of nowhere and pinned his robes to the podium.

Moody sprang into action, grabbed a broom from a member of the audience, and raced up to the rampart that the shot had come from.

"Albus," Minerva screamed.

"I'm not hurt," the Headmaster said calmly. He watched calmly as the Defense Professor returned at a more sedate pace. "Find anything?"

"Crossbow and an owl," Moody grunted, "guy was long gone. Looks like we're dealing with a professional."

"Looks like it," Dumbledore agreed. He turned to Hedwig. "You're Harry's owl aren't you, girl?" Dumbledore laughed. "It's a shame you can't tell me who was up there."

"Prick," Hedwig replied. She couldn't speak many words, but she'd been practicing that one for months.

Dumbledore turned to address the crowd, "I apologize for the interruption." He took a couple of deep calming breaths. "The second task is to retrieve the person that will be missed most by the contestants, that is all." He hurried off the stage and into the safe secure judges' box.

“On your marks . . .”

Harry frowned, he'd expected Parvati to be missing after the girls had deduced the meaning of the test, but he was sure that Padma and Hermione would have shown up to meet him.

“Get set . . .”

He pulled out his wand and took several calming breaths.

“Go.”

Harry carefully pulled what appeared to be a mouthguard out of his pocket. Harry wasn't quite sure how it worked, just that it kept the air in his lungs oxygenated and that it had taken weeks to get the charms right. He then transfigured a couple rocks into weights and dove into the water, letting the weights in his pocket drag him down and past the other contestants.

Harry frowned when he saw his best friend, his girlfriend, and her sister all chained to the bottom of the lake.

'Dumbledore must have been confused at which twin was which?' he reasoned. “And everyone knows that I'd be lost without Hermione.” Harry nodded to himself before incanting three quick spells that surrounded the girls with bubbles of air, causing them to jet to the surface.

He was about to do the same for himself when the two remaining hostages caught his eye. 'In for a penny, in for a pound.' Two more quick spells sent the other two girls rocketing towards the surface and a third meant that he would soon be joining them on the shore.

Harry reached the surface and got a brief glimpse of the shocked Judges and a very relieved Fleur before slumping to the ground.

IIIIIIII

Harry woke up to see three anxious female faces looking down at him.

"Wa hppned?" Harry groaned.

"You came up too fast," Hermione sobbed, "I'm sorry Harry, I forgot all about decompression sickness. It's all my fault that you're here."

"Waaa?"

"Bad things happen when you go down and come up too quickly," Padma whispered to Harry, "Hermione has convinced herself that it's all her fault that you're here."

"Yu cam up too," Harry slurred.

"Something about the potions they made us drink before we went down protected us," the girl explained.

"S'ok Hermine," Harry tried to reassure his friend, "don cry."

"Told you he wouldn't hate you," Parvati soothed the other girl, "nobody can know everything."

Parvati's statement was akin to waving a red flag in front of a bull. Over the next week, Hermione threw herself into the acquisition of new knowledge to the exclusion of everything else.

Things finally came to a head when Ron and Hermione's roommates decided that they'd had enough and tried to force the girl to come out of the library. It's perhaps needless to say that they weren't successful.

That's when they decided to wheel out the big guns.

"Guys," Harry said with a smile. Through mostly healed, Madame Pomfrey had insisted on keeping him in the hospital wing 'just to be sure.' Privately, Harry figured it was because the Healer wanted to keep him from 'the dangers of the world' in a nice safe hospital wing where nothing bad ever happened.

"Harry," Parvati had been chosen to speak for the group, "we have something we need to discuss."

"What is it?" Harry asked nervously, she wasn't breaking up with him was she?

"I think Ron would be the best person to tell you," Padma interjected. The twins still hadn't forgiven the twit for the disastrous date at the ball.

"Ron?"

"Yeah, er . . . you haven't wondered why Hermione hasn't visited have you?"

"What happened?" Harry barked.

"She's locked herself in the library," Parvati said quickly, "she doesn't eat more than a couple bites during meals and she has . . . Pad tells me that she hasn't slept in days."

"She disappears after lights out," Lavender supplied, "we think she's running back to the library."

"My clothes are in Madame Pomfrey's office," Harry began calmly, "get them please."

"But . . ." Parvati tried to protest.

"Now," Harry said firmly.

"Yes, Harry," she agreed meekly.

Harry got dressed and headed to the library in a quick walk, he didn't have enough friends to let one of them work herself to death.

IIIIIIIIII

An evil grin would have adorned Hedwig's face if she had the lips to express it. Sometimes you just have to get traditional about these

things, she thought to herself as she flew east towards the Greek Archipelago, sometimes you just had to use the methods that had been used by the greats in the past.

“Prek,” Hedwig barked. The example made with the death of Aeschylus had taught the world not to slander the avian community in plays and other performances. The example of Dumbledore would show the world that one should never deprive an owl of her bacon.

|||||||

Closely followed by the group of students that had brought the matter to his attention, Harry strode into the library and came to a stop in front of Hermione's table.

Harry was appalled by his best friend's appearance. Hermione's eyes were bloodshot from lack of sleep, her skin was sallow, and her normally bushy hair was matted looking as if it hadn't been brushed in days.

“Get up,” Harry ordered.

“Harry?” a smile lit Hermione's face. “You're out of the hospital wing? But I thought . . .”

Harry grabbed the girl and threw her over his shoulder in a fireman's carry and stormed out of the library past a grinning Madame Pince.

“Put me down,” Hermione demanded, “Harry James Potter you put me down this instant.”

Harry ignored both the squirming girl and the shocked group on his heels until he finally reached the Great Hall.

“Harry, I'm warning you . . .” Hermione cut off when the world spun and she found herself sitting in her customary spot at the Gryffindor table. “What's . . .”

“Eat,” Harry cut her off. He filled a plate with a large selection of everything within reach and plopped it in front of Hermione. “All of it.”



"All of it?" Hermione's asked in dismay as she stared at the Ron sized serving.

"All of it," Harry agreed. He watched as Hermione made a good attempt at emulating Ron and waited until she was reduced to staring at her plate helplessly until he gathered her up in his arms to make the trip up to the Gryffindor Common Room.

"Put me down," Hermione demanded when they went through the portrait. The majority of the watchers would later agree that the flush on the young girl's face indicated that she'd made the protest solely for the sake of appearances.

Harry finally came to a stop in front of the girl's staircase. "She's not allowed to have a book until class on Monday," Harry announced, "if anyone sees her with a book then you're to tell me immediately."

"But, Harry . . ." Hermione whined.

"Do you want to find out if it's possible to go through a week of classes without any books?" Harry interrupted.

"No, Harry," Hermione said meekly. Her flush deepened by several shades.

"Good, now get to bed and stay there until tomorrow morning or so help me I'll . . ." Harry trailed off as his mind failed to supply an appropriately dire threat.

"I'll be good," Hermione promised, she rubbed her cheek against her friend's chest, "I'm glad you're out of the hospital wing, Harry."

"I'm glad to be out," he replied. Harry looked down to find his best friend fast asleep in his arms. "Er . . ."

"We'll carry her up for you," Lavender said with a grin, "eh' Pad?"

"We're happy to help," Parvati agreed.

|||||

Hedwig had captured her prize and was winging back to Scotland, thinking that the classics were all well and good but this had better bloody work.

"Uuuugh," the tortoise groaned. Damned avians.

|||||

Padma caught up to her sister the next day and the two retired to an empty classroom.

"We have a problem," Padma sighed.

"I saw the look on Hermione's face too," her sister agreed, "never would have thought she was the type."

"I would have."

"Eh?"

"You've seen how she sucks up to the Professors, enjoys nothing more than being told what to do."

"Got it, really likes having someone in authority over her."

"And that's our Harry."

"What are we going to do?"

"I don't know," her sister replied, "but I know what we're not going to do."

"It wouldn't end well if we tried to keep them apart," Parvati sighed, "they've been friends since bloody first year."

"Since Harry tossed himself on a bloody troll for her," Padma corrected, "guess that has a way of bringing people together."

"I trust Harry," Parvati announced.

"And Hermione isn't the type to steal someone's boyfriend," Padma agreed, "not intentionally anyway."

"Set her up with someone else?"

"Who?"

"Good point . . . maybe . . . what if we . . ."

"Last resort," Padma said firmly, "absolutely last resort."

"Agreed, though . . ."

"What?"

"I think we'd better resign ourselves to resorting to it," Parvati sighed, "if we want to keep him happy." She'd rather liked getting a glimpse of the 'take charge Harry' and a small part of her wondered if letting Hermione join might not increase the chances of seeing that attitude again.

"Harry's going to learn just how lucky he is one of these days," Padma agreed, "and it might help to have Hermione in our corner." Hopefully without letting the other girl join, sharing with family was one thing but sharing with someone that wasn't her sister?

"In case he doesn't realize how lucky he is," Parvati agreed cheerfully.

"Boys have a way of blowing the smallest things out of proportion," Padma sighed.

IIIIIIIIII

The Headmaster and Deputy Headmistress were again taking their weekly stroll, this time well away from any bits of loose masonry, around the grounds when another object fell from the sky and narrowly missed the Headmaster.

"Aghaagra," Dumbledore squealed.

"My word," Minerva said in astonishment, "a Mediterranean tortoise. I wonder how it got here?"

"It's got my nose," Dumbledore screamed, "the tortoise has my nose." What followed was a string of words definitely not suited to a school environment.

"Really, Headmaster," Minerva huffed, "language."

"Get im off, get im off, get im off . . ."

"Honestly Albus, the poor thing is probably frightened to death and your hysterics are not helping the situation one bit."

High above, Hedwig had turned to get a look at her handywork. "Prek," the owl cursed. Well, at least she'd done some damage to the old goat. Who knew assassinating people could be so hard?

IIIIIIIIII

It was the end of the weekend and Padma found Harry doodling on a bit of paper while he waited for their date to begin.

"What are you doing, Harry?" Padma announced herself.

"Trying to decide if it's worth my bother to go talk to Dumbledore about the second task," Harry replied.

"Oh?" Padma frowned. "What do you want to ask him?"

"Well, I still don't understand why they took you and your sister, the only thing I could figure is that they couldn't tell the difference between you two or something," Harry said in confusion, "it's not like I'm dating both of you."

"Of course not," Padma laughed nervously, "what a silly idea."

"Yeah," Harry agreed, "I guess so."

“And I'm sure it was because they couldn't remember which one of us you were dating,” the girl babbled, “so there's no reason at all to look into it.”

“I guess not,” Harry agreed.

“Now then,” the girl purred as she climbed onto Harry's lap, “why don't we find something else to occupy your mind?”

“What did you have in mind?” Harry asked with a grin.

Needless to say, Harry got back to his dorms a bit late that night.

IIIIIIII

Hermione was sitting between her two friends at breakfast the next day with a book in her lap, eager to make up for the time she'd lost in her forced vacation from reading that weekend when a large owl flew into the great hall and deposited an envelope on her plate.

“What's this?” Hermione muttered to herself as she examined the large envelope the owl had given her.

“Oh good,” Ron cheered, “it came.”

“Sidekicks Monthly,” Hermione read in a dull voice.

“I've heard it has great articles for sidekicks like you,” Ron said with a grin, “neat huh?”

“I am not your sidekick,” Hermione said reflexively.

“Read the article on page six twenty five and then tell me that,” Ron challenged.

“So you think you're not a sidekick, top ten signs that you are,” Hermione muttered. Her eyes darted over the page as she took in the information. “Oh god,” she wailed.

"Told you," Ron said a touch smugly.

|||||

A night in the hospital wing and Albus was almost as good as he'd been before. His nose was still a bit off center and there was a bit of scarring, but all in all he felt rather lucky to have escaped such a vicious tortoise maiming with only superficial scars. On the other hand, the worse thing about the whole situation, the absolutely unforgivable thing was that Minerva had not permitted him to turn the little bugger into soup after they'd finally managed to pry the tortoise off his nose.

"Little bastard tried to eat me," Albus muttered, "only fair that I should be able to eat him."

|||||

Padma was bouncing with excitement when she met her sister the next day for their first switch of the day.

"Sister."

"What is it?" Parvati replied.

"I've got a cunning plan," Padma said with a smug grin.

"I never should have showed you that stupid tele series," Parvati moaned.

"You're just jealous because you don't have a sense of humor and haven't learned to appreciate the subtle . . ."

"Get on with it," Parvati interrupted, "what's your plan?"

"We invite Harry over to our place for summer hols," Padma said with a grin, "think of it."

"A whole summer alone with him," Parvati agreed.

"Won't be easy getting around mum and dad," Padma cautioned.

"But we've been running rings around them for ages," Parvati scoffed, "and I think the pay out is more than worth the effort involved."

"Speaking of payout."

"Yeah?"

"Colin came through on the pics," Padma said with a lazy grin, "check this out."

"We can never let Harry know we have these," Parvati said, her eyes locked on the photo.

"Creepy little bugger thinks he sold them to Draco," Padma said with a shudder, "we're going to have to find a way to convince him not to do something like that in the future."

"True."

|||||

Hedwig selected another dart and carefully rubbed the tip on the back of the frog she'd procured from one of the less reputable shops in Knockturn alley. No more Miss nice owl, it was time she got serious about things. The old fool would get one more 'warning' and if that didn't work then she'd pull out the big guns.

|||||

The Weasley twins immediately accosted a bewildered Harry as he walked into the Gryffindor Common Room that night.

"Harry," George called out, "we can't tell you how proud we are of you."

"You've done what every man-"

"-us especially."

"Has dreamed of since the dawn of time."

"Good on you, mate."

"Did the marauders proud."

"We were starting to doubt-"

"Just a bit mind you."

"Only a bit, yes."

"To doubt that you took after your father at all."

"Since you never took part in any pranks."

"What were we supposed to think?"

"Nothing, that's what."

"But this, this is stupendous."

"Tremendous."

"Super keen. You should have told us that you were saving yourself for a debut like that."

"We would have kept quiet."

"But you didn't."

"And it makes us sad."

"Not that you managed it."

"But that we can never top it."

"Harry Potter."



"We salute you," the twins said together. They gave him a smart salute and marched out of the Common Room.

"What just happened?" Harry asked in confusion.

"Don't worry about it," Padma said quickly, "and shouldn't you be on a date with my sister right now?"

"I don't think so."

"Better go wait in the Great Hall just to be sure," she advised, "cause I'm fairly sure she told me that she was looking forward to something today."

|||||

Dumbledore looked over the assorted staff members, pausing a second to glare at the tortoise in Minerva's arms before allowing his gaze to move on.

"Are you going to be able to get the shrubbery grown in time, Pomona?" he asked the portly head of Hufflepuff House.

"No problem, Albus," the woman replied.

None of them noticed as the window cracked open a bit.

"Wonderful," Albus cheered, "have you arranged for security, Alastor?"

"I have," the scarred man replied, "but I'm still going to want to make one last walk around before the contest starts."

"Of course," Dumbledore agreed.

"And when I'm finished, no one goes in or out till the students start their bloody contest. I . . ." the man's hand shot up to his throat and a shocked look came over the defense Professor's face as he slumped to the ground.

"Out of the way," the healer shouted, she elbowed a slow Snape in the ribs. She reached the body and hit it with a couple quick diagnostic charms. "He's dead."

"What?" the rest of the staff gasped.

"Poison," the Healer said professionally, "delivered by the dart in his neck. Oh, and incidentally, this isn't Mad Eye Moody."

"Who is it then?" Dumbledore asked.

"Won't find that out until after the autopsy," the Healer replied, "this may be a good time to call in the Aurors."

"Yes," Dumbledore agreed, "of course."

IIIIIIII

In testament to how serious the death of the faux Moody was taken by the upper echelons of the Ministry, Amelia Bones herself came to supervise the investigation.

"What do you got?" Amelia asked as her people returned with their findings.

"We found a blowgun on the ledge," the first Auror reported, "whoever this is, they're a pro."

"What's the autopsy tell us?" Amelia barked.

"Poison used is associated with a type of South American frog," the coroner said absently, "and I can't be a hundred percent sure but I believe I have an identity."

"Who is it?" Amelia asked calmly.

"A dead man."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Barty Crouch Junior," the replied, "glad sorting this mess out isn't my job."

"That's why I get the big paycheck," Amelia sighed, it was going to be one of those days.

|||||||

It wasn't hard to get the raw materials for the next stage of her plan, Hedwig mused as she watched her jerrycans get filled, all she need was a bit of gold and a cooperative human.

"So what are you planning to do with all this petrol?" the man at the pump asked with a bored expression on his face.

"Prek."

"Didn't realize it was so explosive," he said calmly. Man his buddies had sold him some premo shit.

"Prek, prek prek."

"I see, yeah we got LPG too."

"Prek."

"That much?"

"Prek."

"Well, so long as you can pay for it."

|||||||

As Hedwig prepared to enact the next part of her plan, tentatively called 'Operation Plentiful Bacon,' the contestants readied themselves for the third task. The powers that be had decided to continue the Tournament despite several objections from everyone with more then two brain cells to rub together.

"I still say this is a bad idea," Minerva growled.

"And I still say that you should let me eat that damned turtle," Dumbledore retorted. He punctuated his point with a jab at the 'damned turtle' in question, something that in hindsight was a very bad idea. "My finger," Dumbledore squealed, "it's got my bloody finger."

"Well you shouldn't have shook it at him like that," Minerva said unsympathetically, "honestly Albus, I don't understand why you can't leave the poor tortoise alone." She was half convinced that he was jealous at the attention she gave the creature.

|||||

Hedwig crawled under the Dursley family automobile and expertly disabled the brakes. Sure it would have been nice to take care of all the loose ends at the same time, but she'd rejected that plan for being overly complex.

|||||

Ron, wearing his best new set of pink dress robes, flopped down next to Hermione on the stands.

"Here I am," the boy said happily, "they haven't started yet have they?"

"No," Hermione said. On her other side, Padma and Parvati did their best to ignore Harry's insensitive friend. "They're just starting."

"Wonnrrrrnderful," Ron purred.

"Where'd you get that robe anyway?" Hermione demanded. It hadn't been easy to drag her attention away from the maze, but Ron's eye searing robes been too flamboyant to miss.

"I can't tell you in front of the norms," Ron whispered, "it's something that I can only share with my sidekick." That fabulous little house elf had made him promise after all.

"I . . ." Hermione sighed. "Fine."

"Super."

|||||

Harry rushed through the maze, defeating challenge after challenge until he finally reached the trophy along with Cedric. Like they did in a hundred other dimensions, Cedric and Harry stood together before the trophy.

"You take it," Cedric sighed, "you deserve it Harry."

"Why don't we both take it?" Harry suggested.

"What?"

"That way it'll still be a Hogwarts victory if we both take it," Harry argued.

"Right," Cedric agreed, "on three."

"One-

"-two-

"THREE," they said together as they grabbed the trophy.

The maze dropped, the sky lit up as sparks flew everywhere, and the crowd went wild when they saw the two Hogwarts champions holding the cup aloft. It was a good day for Hogwarts, one of the best in the school's history. Much contraband alcohol was consumed and the party lasted until the small hours of the morning.

|||||

The next afternoon, Hedwig picked the lock on the back door and crept into the empty house to enact the next stage of her cunning plan.

|||||

Padma and her sister each took possession of one of Harry's hands as they got into the carriages that would take them to the train.

|||||

Hedwig watched with a sense of deep satisfaction as the Dursley house disappeared in a massive fireball. Sure the pyrotechnic display had taken a lot of extra work and granted it would have been easier to just wire the whole thing with C4, but it wouldn't have been half as pretty.

The wily old fool had managed to escape her this year, but she'd still thwarted his inept attempt to banish her to the land of no bacon and there was always next year.

"Prek prek prek," Hedwig precked as she plotted the Headmaster's doom.

|||||

Dumbledore was just pouring himself an early afternoon pick me up when the floo flared and a frantic Ms. Fig appeared.

"Albus it's awful," Ms. Fig sobbed, "you have to come quick."

"What is it, Arabella?"

"The Dursley house . . ."

"What about it?" Dumbledore asked intently.

"It's . . . it's gone."

"What?"

"I overheard one of the local police say that someone blew it up," Fig said breathlessly, "they've got an armed unit here and they're

evacuating the neighborhood. There are magical things here, I can't let them check my house."

"I'll be right over," Dumbledore assured the panicked woman.

|||||||

The Dursleys squealed in fear as their car raced uncontrollably down the deserted road.

"Hit the breaks, Vernon," Petunia screamed.

"Bloody things won't work," Vernon bellowed.

|||||||

It didn't take long to summon Aurors to take charge of keeping the muggle authorities out of Ms. Fig's magical residence and so Dumbledore was left free to go off in search of the Dursley family to see if they might not have some clue as to what happened to their residence.

Thanks to the many tracking charms he'd been thoughtful enough to apply to nearly everything they owned, Dumbledore was able to locate them in no time and he quickly apparated to their location.

He found the three of them sitting by a pond watching mournfully as their car sunk into a rather large duck pond.

"Just the people I was looking for," Dumbledore said cheerfully, "would any of you happen to know why your house exploded?" Dumbledore asked. "It's rather important to establish if was an accident or not before Harry arrives."

"Our house?" Petunia moaned.

"What about my things?" Dudley whined.

"No," Vernon said firmly.

"Excuse me?" Dumbledore asked.

"No way in hell are we taking that freak back," Vernon growled, "our house blew up, someone cut the bloody break lines on my bloody car, you . . ."

"Mr. Dursley please," Dumbledore interrupted, "be reasonable."

"Reasonable?" Vernon demanded. He shoved the old wizard, causing the other man to fall to the ground. It was an action that saved Albus' life. "I'll show you . . ." Vernon cut off when he noticed a large shadow forming on the ground around him, he had just enough time to look up and scream before the grand piano crushed him into a paste.

"Well," Dumbledore muttered in shock, "I guess you're right." He made eye contact with the two remaining Dursleys, "I guess if the wards have degraded this bad then it'd be better if Harry didn't come back." He apparated away before they had a chance to reply.

|||||||

Dumbledore was waiting when the train pulled into the station and he greeted Harry and his friends when they stepped onto the platform.

"I'm afraid I've got some rather shocking news for you, Harry," Dumbledore said slowly, hoping to spare the boy the shock of receiving such horrible news.

"What is it?"

"I'm afraid that your house has exploded," Dumbledore said mournfully, "so you will not be able to stay with your relatives this year. In addition to that . . . in addition to that your uncle has been the victim of a rather nasty accident and is no longer among the living."

To Dumbledore's dismay Harry's jaw dropped open and he just seemed to stare into nothingness. To everyone that had interacted with the boy beyond dropping vague hints that would lead him to mortal peril, it was obvious that Harry was trying to convince himself that he wasn't experiencing the best dream of his life.



"He can stay with us," Parvati said quickly.

"It'll be no trouble at all," Padma agreed.

"And my house is always open if theirs isn't," Hermione said helpfully. She wasn't going to end up an old maid with a Weasley roommate.

"We've already asked our parents," Padma said evenly, "and our house is already warded."

"But you could join us if you like," Parvati offered.

"We'd have to ask our parents first," Padma corrected firmly. She shot a glare at her twin.

"So . . . I don't have to go back to the Dursleys then?" Harry asked slowly, a smile bloomed on his face as the information sunk in.

"I'm afraid not," Dumbledore consoled the boy, "it really isn't safe . . ."

"Vernon's Dead and I can spend the summer with my girlfriend?" Harry continued.

"Yes, I suppose the Patil family has strong enough wards to . . ."

"BEST YEAR EVER," Harry cheered.

AN: Polish by dogbertcarroll,clell, rijl\_kent, and thewombat. Blowgun by Finbar, Tortoise by dogbertcarroll, more by others I'm sure I'm missing. The Hermione liking Harry part took me by surprise, but it got the ideas flowing. If I were to write this out as a full fic, then Hermione would just be another obstacle for the twins to overcome on their quest to double date their green eyed boyfriend. May have to write a Hermione turned on by authority fic at some later date. Could have made this longer, could have made this better, but I just wanted to finish it.

Omake: Never liked the way this scene came together.

The Headmaster looked up from his breakfast as a large imposing owl dropped a large imposing package on the table in front of him.

"What could this be?" he muttered to himself.

He dropped the box in surprise when a large and angry badger sprang out and began savaging the Head of Slytherin House.

"Get it off, get it off," Snape squealed.

Hedwig watched from her place on Harry's shoulder. "Prek," she cursed. The old fool had escaped justice once again, though she did manage to maim the slimy dark haired bastard. It was a small consolation.

Omake: Ron finds out that Quiche is brain food and decides that he's a genius

"Hermione," Ron began with a condescending look, "I've eaten over two pounds of quiche today . . ."

"That doesn't change the fact that you're wrong about Meriweather's rules of potion making," Hermione snapped.

"How much quiche have you eaten today?" he asked snidely.

Omake: Poorly done

"You got anymore of that stuff you sold me?" the pump jockey asked hopefully.

"You mean the oragano," his buddy giggled, "moron."

"Couldn't have been oragano."

"Why not?"

"Last night an owl came and bought have the petrol at the station, said she was going to use it to blow up a house in Surrey."

Omake by rijl\_kent

"Hello, Parvati."

"Uh, Cho, I'm Padma."

"No, you're just wearing Padma's robes. Some of us in Ravenclaw are actually smart and observant."

"What do you want?"

"Well, since you're obviously open to the idea of sharing, I don't have to settle for Cedric."

Omake by SlickRCBD

"How could you play with my feelings like this? Was it all a game to you, mess with my feelings and pretend to date me? See how oblivious I can be and fail to notice? Does it make you feel good to pull the wool over my eyes?" screamed Harry.

Padma & Parvati took Harry's rant with shamed heads. Finally, Padma said. "You are right. We've been bad. Wicked, naughty, evil. We are naughty girls, and must pay the penalty. You must tie me down on a bed and spank me."

Parvati chimed in "Yes, a spanking, a spanking. You must spank me as well; and after you have spanked us, you may deal with us as you like. Padma added "And after the spanking, the oral sex..."

Omake by Swordchucks

"Harry... there's something I... we have to tell you?" Padma said, wringing her hands. When they'd started this, they knew it would have to happen eventually. Hogwarts graduation was in three days, and there was simply no longer any way to extend the charade without one of them having to give up the man they loved.

"What is it?" he asked tentatively. She had that done that every man dreads with a passion. The 'let's be friends' or the 'I didn't know he was your cousin' voice.

"I... ever since we started dating, Parvati and I have been trading places. You've... you've been dating both of us," she said and went silent. There, she'd said it.

"Oh, that? I know."

"You must be... wait, you know?"

"Yeah, I've known since like the second week. You two are good... but not that good."

"I... we..." she stammered. It'd been tearing her up inside for over a year and he'd bloody well known.

"Yeah, it's funny watching you switch and try to cover for not knowing what was going on. Endearing, even."

"But... we..." realization hit her. "That's why Parvati denied being the first one to shag you!"

Harry had the decency to blush. "Well... you see... about that..."

"You kept going on about how wonderful 'last night' was and how you wanted a repeat... you... you..."

"Well, maybe we were all three a little to blame for things, so why can't we just call it all even?"

"Harry James Potter," she growled, her wand appearing in her hand.

"OHSHI-" Harry managed as he turned to flee from one rather irate witch.

Omake by meteoricshipyards

Padma sniffed. "You're absolutely right. We were wrong."

Pavarti nodded. "You must punish us."

Harry had a sneaking suspicion that he knew where this conversation was going.

Padma continued, "And there's only one punishment in Castle Hogwarts. . . ."

"Take points?" Harry guessed.

"No silly, you must spank us!"

Omake by ausfinbar

Hedwig frowned to herself, so far the evil denier of Bacon had proved not just ignorant, but well protected and lucky, but soon, very soon, vengeance would be hers.

It had taken far too much work to first find the Coatl, then had to hunt down thirty rats to offer as a bribe, but it had paid off and the feathered, flying serpent was prepared to act as a translator to a large number of venomous snakes for her. They had required their own bribes but finally, weeks of work was about to pay off.

"Ah yes" Dumbledore smiled to himself. The third task would be soon and then Harry would be out of danger. His own brilliant planning meant that the young boy, such a nice young boy, would be able to return to the loving embrace of his family for a summer of relaxation. "I really must go and check the wards one day. Even though there havent been any problems on my monitors, it pays to be careful."

His train of thought was interrupted by a hissing sound. Blinking in shock, he rose to his feet as no less than a dozen varied and assorted venomous snakes emerged into his office from behind bookshelves, through a window and one from the chandelier. All of them hissing malevolently and all of them heading for him.

"Hmm, I wonder how this happened?" Casually waving his wand, the snakes were transfigured into sticks. "Only Voldemort could have

done this. Clearly he is being much more aggressive because he doesn't want me to protect Harry. The sooner he returns to his relatives, the safer he will be. I think he will need to stay there the entire summer this time. Better to be safe than sorry."

Outside, on a window ledge, Hedwig fumed to herself. Her plan to kill off the old man foiled once again. The land of No Bacon loomed closer. "Prick"

Unrelated Omake: Cupboard

"Get in there," the girl said cruelly as she shoved Luna into the closet.

"Yeah," one of the others crowed. The group of second years was relishing the fact that they finally someone below them on the Hogwarts pecking order.

Luna's breath quickened as she heard the bolt slide home. 'They're just playing around,' she tried to convince herself, 'they'll let you out soon.

She heard the faint sounds of footsteps retreating from the door of the closet and she lost control. "Let me out," she screamed, "don't leave me here." Tears rushed down her face. "Somebody let me out," Luna sobbed, "anybody . . . please," she whimpered, "please."

In the normal course of events, the girl would spend a very uncomfortable weekend locked in the closet until she finally managed to force the door open. By then, days of solitude and darkness would have already fractured her fragile mind and she'd spend hours talking about fictitious creatures that only she could see. This time, something else happened . . .

"Hello," Harry peered into the dark closet. He could have sworn he'd heard someone crying. His eyes slowly adjusted and he saw girl holding her knees to her chest and rocking back and fourth.

An: Just can't think of anything more to do with this scene.

## Sands of Time

Harry watched in shock as Sirius flew towards the veil. If only he had more time, if only . . . Harry watched in shock as Sirius jerked to a halt before collapsing on the floor. Shortly after that, a curse came from nowhere and turned Bellatrix's head into a fine pink mist. Several more hexes ended the careers of several more Death Eaters.

"Who dares?" Voldemort screamed. The snake like man backed up slowly. "Show yourself, show yoof." An unseen force hit the Dark Lord and pushed him into the veil.

Seeing that their numbers were greatly reduced and that their Lord and master had been defeated, the remaining Death Eaters dropped their wands and raised their hands.

"What just happened?" One of the Order members muttered in shock.

"No body move," Amelia Bones screamed as she led in a group of Aurors. "Bloody hell," she said after she'd taken in the carnage. "What happened here?"

"Voldemort and his followers were attempting to retrieve an . . . item from the Department," Dumbledore replied, "we arrived to stop them."

"It never occurred to you to call the Aurors?" Amelia asked with a frown. "Don't think I don't see a few of mine with your lot."

"I . . ." Dumbledore gaped, he was speechless for the first time in many years.

"Is it safe to come in, Amelia?" Fudge's whiny voice asked.

"Come in, Minister," Amelia agreed.

"My word," Fudge gasped, "what has happened here?"

"Dumbledore says that Voldemort attacked," Amelia reported, "suppose it would explain all the Death Eaters."

"That can't be true," Fudge said loudly, "the Dark Thingy is not back. Dumbledore must be lying again to . . ."

"I'm afraid that he's right," one of the Death Eaters said smoothly. "Mind if I remove my mask?"

"Slowly," Amelia growled.

The Death Eater removed his mask to reveal the smiling face of Lucius Malfoy.

"Lucius?" Fudge gasped. "But what, what's going on?"

"The Dark Lord returned," Lucius explained, "and put us under the Imperius curse again. I suspect that the Dark Mark makes it impossible to resist," he added absently.

"The Dark Thingy?" Fudge squeaked. "Here?"

"And gone again," Lucius agreed, "thrown into the Veil."

"So he's gone for good?" Fudge asked hopefully.

"So I think we'd better make sure this time," Lucius corrected. He'd rather liked the years he'd spent out from under the Dark Lord's thumb and he had no intention of putting his collar back on, not when freedom was in sight. "Don't you agree?"

"Of course," Fudge said nervously, "whatever you think is best, Lucius."

"Where's Harry?" Sirius said suddenly.

"My word," Fudge squeaked, "Sirius Black."

"I'm innocent," Sirius said automatically. "Harry," he called out, "Harry are you here?"

IIIIIIIIII



Harry had slipped out shortly after the Aurors arrived. A few minutes of searching rewarded him with an unbroken time turner and a few turns took him several hours into the past.

"Invisibility cloak," Harry mumbled to himself. "Better go back a little further, just to be sure I have enough time to find one."

"Might have gone a bit too far," Harry admitted to himself as he walked through the empty corridors.

Harry eyed the rack full of unbroken time turners. "Be a shame not to rescue a couple of them," he mumbled to himself. Harry grabbed several of the valuable devices.

"Now if I were an invisibility cloak, where would I be?"

Harry soon found out that the evidence storage room was a bust. Not that it wasn't full of several useful items that Harry happily appropriated, just no Invisibility cloaks. The rest of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement was similarly a wash in terms of cloaks, Harry figured that they were probably stored in one of the locked cabinets. Happily, there were plenty of things that were not stored in the locked cabinets that Harry cheerfully added to his growing collection. Never knew what might come in handy and he did plan to return everything after he dealt with the Death Eaters and saved his godfather.

Harry spent several hours ransacking the Ministry in search of an Invisibility Cloak until finally, he had the good fortune of finding the warehouse where the Department of Mysteries stored the majority of their un-cursed items.

Harry flipped through the catalog until he found an entry for an experimental invisibility suit. The experimental part worried him until he found a notation explaining that the suit worked exceptionally well, just not quite well enough to justify the expense of replacing the existing cloaks. Harry grabbed several more items that looked interesting and useful before going off to find a place to hide until he was needed.

Harry checked the clock again, nearly ten hours until he had to save Sirius. Maybe it hadn't been such a good idea to go back so far? Harry eyed one of the Auror combat manual he'd picked up earlier, however was he going to pass the time?

An explosion woke Harry with a start. This was it, he carefully loaded his collection of borrowed items into the bag of holding that he'd found the night before and set off to complete his self assigned mission.

Harry carefully snuck past the fight to the spot he'd chosen the night before. It was out of the way, offered a clear view of the field of battle, and above all had a giant stone pillar to hide behind.

"Accio, Sirius," Harry whispered. While the spell wasn't powerful enough to summon the wizard, it was more than powerful enough to save him from going through the veil. "Reductio, sepolio, flatus, trunco, adustum, suscito." A grin bloomed on Harry's face as he watched Voldemort helplessly scream at his defeated foe. With a sudden flash of insight, Harry realized what he had to do. Harry took a deep breath and ran towards his foe, building up enough momentum until.

"Yoof." The air rushed out of Voldemort's lungs as Harry tackled him, sending them both through the veil.

IIIIIIII

It took several hours for the forensics team to piece together what had happened to the Dark Lord from the ward data reluctantly provided by the Department of Mysteries.

"So that's it," one of the techs said as they watched the spectral figure of Harry Potter vanish through the Veil. "Harry Potter saved us again, just . . ."

"Just gonna have to change the name," another interjected, "since 'boy-who-lived' doesn't quite fit anymore."

"Bastard."

The news spread like wildfire through the Ministry prompting the majority of the employees to take the remainder of the day off to be alone with their grief.

The only person who welcomed the news was Minister Fudge, but then he'd always been of the opinion that a dead hero was much easier to manage than a live one.

|||||||

Arthur took several deep calming breaths before he opened the door to his house. You have to be strong for Molly, he told himself. You can't break down, you have to be her rock. He squeezed his eyes shut and slowly counted to ten.

"Molly," he called out as he walked into the house, "where are you?"

"In the kitchen, dear."

He put his hands on her shoulders and carefully guided her into one of the chairs.

"What's wrong?" Molly asked nervously. "Arthur, tell me what's wrong?" Her eyes automatically flicked to something over her husband's shoulder.

"It's Harry," Arthur said sadly, "I'm afraid that he didn't survive his last duel with Voldemort."

"Who told you that?" Molly demanded.

"It's all over the office," Arthur said slowly.

"Well I thought you had better sense than to listen to stupid rumors," Molly said with a sniff. "Imagine, letting yourself be taken in by something so silly."

"Molly, it's true I . . ."

"Look at the clock," Molly demanded.

"What?"

"The clock," Molly barked, "look at it."

Arthur slowly turned his head to stare dully at the Weasley family clock for several seconds until he realized what his wife was trying to impart.

"If Harry's dead then why does it say that he's traveling right now?" Molly asked sweetly. "And why did it say that he was at lunch earlier?"

"I need to contact the Department of Mysteries right now," Arthur called over his shoulder as he rushed to the floo.

AN: Typos busted by Anthony Ellwood. Just trying to make a good start for a crossover fic, use a banishing charm instead of a tackle and it could be a Harry and his odd devices fic. Idea is that after he goes through the veil, Harry ends up somewhere else. Voldemort could follow, could be killed when the connection to his anchors gets severed, could any number of things. I might use this as I have a couple ideas on where to take it. Feel free to use it if you'd like to.

Omake: No Xover

"Yoof." The air rushed out of Voldemort's lungs as Harry hit the Dark Wizard with his most powerful banishing hex. Harry felt a smug sense of satisfaction as he watched his nemesis disappear through the veil.

His good deed for the day done, Harry removed his invisibility suit and stowed it in his nifty new messenger bag of holding.

"Harry," he called out, "Harry are you here?" Sirius' voice called out.

"Over here," Harry replied, "took cover behind this pillar and hit Voldemort with a banishing hex."

"Good job," Sirius said cheerfully, "that's my godson."

Due to the presence of Madame Bones and in light of the fact that Harry had just publicly defeated the Dark Lord Voldemort, Fudge had no choice but to accept his testimony that Sirius was innocent.

"There's just one thing I don't understand," Sirius said as they walked up to the castle gates, "how'd you get across the room without anyone seeing you?"

"I had a little help," Harry replied, "from the sands of time." A grin bloomed on Harry's face when he realized that he'd 'forgotten' to return the items he'd borrowed from the Ministry. Well, there were still Death Eaters out there and who knew how many times Voldemort could bring himself back to life? Best to keep a hold of everything until he was absolutely sure that it wouldn't be needed again.

Omake: Explanation

"Well," the lead unspeakable said with a frown, "this just doesn't make sense. We know that the Veil rips out a beings soul when they go through so it shouldn't be possible for the Potter boy to have survived."

"Not unless he was running around with an extra soul fragment or something anyway," another joked. This set off a round of laughs.

"Maybe it was because the Dark Lord was in a construct body?" Another suggested. "So the soul was ripped out of that and Harry, ah . . ."

"Flew in under the radar?"

"Sure, why not?"

"Just as likely that it's part of the whole 'boy-who-lived' jazz or something to do with surviving the killing curse."

"Opens up new avenues of research anyway."

"That it does."

AN: Idea from a post by dogbertcarroll

Omake: DC

The first thing that Harry noticed when he regained consciousness was a news report about a glowing green man fighting aliens. Either the statute of secrecy had been badly fractured, or he wasn't in Kansas anymore so to speak.

Two weeks and several attempts to make contact with magical society via getting caught for underage sorcery, all of which ended in failure, convinced Harry that he was indeed very far from home. This prompted a mild panic attack that led to the hospitalization of thirty two members of the Purple Gang, the remainder of the gang to the morgue, and Harry slipping out of town in the back of an empty box car.

But he was better now, Harry told himself, calmer and more focused. All he had to do was wait until his friends found a way to bring him back, and if he should happen to pass the time by drifting around watching this world's so called 'super heros' in action, well who could blame him?

Harry was pulled from his musings by the appearance of several large tattooed men blocking the mouth of the alley he was cutting across.

"You wanna get through here, you gotta pay the toll," the apparent leader of the band said menacingly.

"What toll?" Harry asked dumbly. His fingers wrapped around the comforting grip of his wand. It was so convenient the way this sort of thing seemed to happen every time he started to run low on cash. Course, an outside observer might point out the fact that Harry was prone to taking midnight strolls through the edges of the less monied parts of town every time his reserves ran low. If only his friends could see him now, they'd be so proud of the way he'd learned to live off the land.

"Gimme yer wallet, boy," the lead thug demanded. "Less you wanna get cut."

"Stupefy," Harry replied, "Stupefy Stupefy Stupefy." Harry looked down at the fallen thugs. "Any of you mind if I take your wallets?" He asked politely. "No? Alright then, I really appreciate this donation to the keep Harry fed fund." Harry expertly stripped the thugs and tied them to a lamp post after tossing everything of use or value into his messenger bag of holding. "Now then," he said to himself, "I'm pretty sure I saw a restaurant advertising fresh pie a few blocks back." Mmmm, pie.

|||||||

The Commissioner rubbed his hands against the biting cold as he waited on the roof of the police station for his 'contact' to arrive.

"You called, Commissioner Gordon?" A gravelly voice announced the arrival of Gotham's greatest detective.

"Patrol car picked up four unconscious men, found them tied to a light pole on the east side."

"So?"

"So the hospital said that there wasn't anything wrong with them," the Commissioner explained. "Then all of the sudden they each woke up with a strange story of a boy hitting them with a strange red light. For no reason of course, though the fact that each one of them had a rap sheet as long as my arm makes me a bit skeptical of that version of events."

"I'll look into it," the gravelly voice promised.

"So you don't have any . . ." the Commissioner trailed off when it became apparent that he was on the roof alone. "I hate it when he does that."

|||||||

Batman returned to his lair and immediately set his powerful super computer to work searching for any similar cases.

It appeared that the first reported cases were among the few surviving members of the 'Purple Gang' and that a trail of similar cases had occurred in a number of cities ending in.

"Gotham," Batman growled. What was this? He thought to himself. A misguided new hero that didn't understand the prohibition against lethal force? He examined the morgue photos carefully for clues. Or perhaps a new villain out to make a reputation for themself?

Whoever it was had better watch their back, The Bat was gunning for them and their time was limited. He didn't tolerate loose cannons in 'his' city.

IIIIIIII

Harry had seen a flier for a newly opened exhibit on the treasures of the Egyptian tombs at the Gotham History Museum and he couldn't wait to

It was gonna be one of those days, Harry mused when the windows exploded and a group of heavily armed clowns rushed in. Well, he'd learned his lesson, no going to museums if you didn't want to come face to face with a homicidal madman. Harry froze as an uncomfortable fact made itself known, make that no learning without coming face to face with a homicidal madman. If four years of Hogwarts had taught him anything . . . Harry frowned. If all of his life experiences had taught him anything, it was that there was always someone out to kill, maim, or otherwise inconvenience Harry Potter. It was like he was the universes' spittoon or something.

He came back to his senses just in time to see the lead clown pointing a pair of comically large revolvers at a group of school children.

Harry sighed, two quick cutting charms and he'd done his good deed for the day. He glanced around to make sure no one was paying attention before summoning the comically large revolvers. They might



come in handy, and it wasn't like the clown would ever be able to use them again. He then remembered that he could turn invisible and belatedly scampered behind a pillar to get his suit on.

"Harley," the insane clown called out, "did I put on my removable hands gag today?"

"I don't think so, Mista J, why?"

"Because my hands have fallen off," the Joker replied with a wave of his arms that sent bright red spurts of arterial blood spraying across the museum.

"Goodness, Mista J. You've been disarmed," Harley said in shock.

"I didn't disarm him," Harry's voice echoed through the room, "I unhanded him."

"Finally a hero that enjoys a proper joke," the Joker laughed, "might I have the name of Gotham's new punisher?"

"No heros here," Harry said quickly, "I'm allergic to spandex. I'm just a guy on vacation," Harry said. Granted it wasn't a vacation he'd taken by choice, but those words had just seemed so right.

Mini Omake: Harry's response to the caped crew taking umbrage to his more permanent way of dealing things by dogbertcarroll

"I call it self defense. You may be powerful enough to survive these nutbars trying to kill you, but I'm not. So rather than risk my life in a futile effort to take him alive, so he can escape and kill others, I just

defended my self, something I am capable and legally entitled to do."

Omake: SM

Harry's mouth tasted like the color yellow and his eyes felt like they were filled with sand. Tackling Voldemort hadn't been one of his better ideas, Harry reflected to himself.

"Should have just used a banishing charm or something," Harry muttered to himself. Or anything else that didn't involve going through the veil with his nemesis, really not one of his better ideas.

Harry was torn from his musings by the arrival of several scantily clad cheerleaders chattering in some foreign language. This held his attention for a few seconds before he decided to go off in search of someone that could help him contact one of his friends, or at the very least someone who spoke English.

A frown appeared on Harry's face when one of the cheerleaders threw a bolt of lightning in his general direction. Granted it missed and caused untold thousands in property damage, but it was the principle of the thing.

"That's the way you wanna play it, huh?" Harry growled. "Okay, we can play. Petrificus Totalus, Petrificus Totalus, Petrificus Totalus. Stupid cheerleaders," he said to his defeated foes. Who knew they'd take him ignoring their performance so badly? Perhaps Vernon was right when he said that artistic types were flighty and should all be locked up? The horrifying concept that Vernon could be right about anything nearly caused Harry to vomit and he stumbled away clutching his stomach.

|||||||

At the gates of time, Pluto dropped to the ground clutching her head as unimaginable pain wracked her body. She screamed and screamed until her throat was raw and sore, course on Pluto there was no one to hear her.

|||||||

Usagi was the first of the Pretty Sailor Scouts to regain the ability to move shortly followed by Jupiter. In the time she'd been frozen, she'd had ample time to go over the battle to figure out what had gone wrong.

They'd arrived in the park to find the newest Dark General standing in the middle of a charred section of grass. She had then launched her

speech about how parks were places to relax, the general had gotten bored and begun to wander off. Jupiter had then flung an attack at him and then the General had defeated all of them with some sort of odd magical attack. To be quite frank, she was mystified by their defeat as it appeared that they'd done everything right on their end. The only thing she could think to attribute their defeat to was the fact that the Dark General hadn't been polite enough to listen to their speech. A chill went down the girl's back as she considered the idea that future enemies might not wait politely until she had finished their introductory speeches, heaven help them all if that happened.

"We need to have a meeting to talk about what happened," Usagi said to her friends.

|||||||

Pluto gasped for breath as she tried to figure out what had happened. Was it an attack of some sort? A side effect of having lived so long. The oldest active Sailor Scout automatically reached out for a bottle of aspirin, freezing in mid gesture. There was no pain, she thought in wonder, her headache was gone. The headache that she'd suffered for thousands of years was gone. That could only mean . . .

Pluto rushed to the time gates to confirm her suspicion. Crystal Tokyo was gone, there was no way to force the time line back. With no way of resurrecting the remnants of the Moon Kingdom, the Queen's geas had shattered. She was free, for the first time in thousands of years, perhaps ever, the Senshi of Pluto was free.

Pluto wept as she contemplated what she'd done, the crimes she'd been forced to commit, the innocent lives destroyed, the knowledge lost, just so a spoiled little girl could have her castle. Setsuna stopped just short of declaring eternal gratitude to her savior. She'd just been freed of her bonds and was less than eager to find a new set, still . . . it couldn't hurt to find out a bit of information, could it?

|||||||

Ami looked around the group, no one was willing to vocalize what they were all thinking. She took a deep breath and let it out, why did it always have to fall to her?

"I think we made a mistake," she said softly. Every eye turned to regard the smartest Senshi.

"What do you mean, Ami?" Makoto demanded.

"Yeah," Usagi whined. She was still more than a bit annoyed at the way he'd ignored her speech.

"I think . . . I think that the boy in the park wasn't a Dark General," Ami said reluctantly. "Maybe he was here to help us?"

"There was a cute boy and you guys drove him away?" Minako wailed.

"Ami didn't say he was cute," Rei pointed out.

"But he was, wasn't he?" Minako persisted.

"He had gorgeous eyes," Ami said with a blush.

"He looked just like . . ." Makoto began.

"Your old sempai right?"

"No, better than my old sempai. He looked just like a movie star."

The girls shared a collective sigh.

"And he was also speaking English so he might not have understood what we were saying," Ami continued. "And he seemed . . . uh . . . annoyed when we attacked him. With the casual way he defeated us added to the fact that his attack didn't do any damage, well . . ."

"You chased off a cute foreign boy," Minako sobbed, "now I'll never get a boyfriend."

IIIIIIII

Pluto frowned in confusion. It was if the boy, her savior, had no past. Resolving to settle the issue later, she decided to check the future.

The gates displayed a powerful looking man sitting on a large throne. Reclining at his feet with her head rested on his leg was . . . her. Setsuna licked her lips unconsciously as the view widened to reveal the rest of the senshi laying around the room in various states of undress.

Setsuna gasped when the man suddenly raised his head to stare back at her with a set of the greenest eyes. They maintained eye contact for a few moments until the image shattered.

She needed to think on what she'd seen, well after she changed her panties anyway. She shivered in pleasure, that was one future she couldn't wait to experience.

AN: Just a bit of fun.

Omake: Valhalla

Harry groaned in pain, he'd thought death wasn't supposed to hurt, looked like he was wrong. His jaw dropped in shock after Harry managed to open his eyes to examine his surroundings.

"Where am I?" Harry murmured in shock.

"Where did you expect to be?" A large man asked.

"Dead," Harry said honestly.

"That makes sense," the man said reassuringly, "Asgard, home of Valhalla where fallen warriors hone their skills to perfection."

"Oh."

"Not where you expected to end up?"

"I didn't expect to end up anywhere," Harry replied, "it's not something I gave much thought to."

"Rejoice then, your courage in your final battle prompted your selection."

"I didn't do much," Harry said with an embarrassed blush.

"What did you do?"

"Well . . ."

Omake: Cear er Care Azkaban

Harry rose to his feet with a groan, just were the hell was he?

"Hello," an oddly cute voice said from behind, "I'm sunshine bear, who are you?"

Harry turned and began screaming in Horror. "REDUCTO, REDUCTO, REDUCTO, REDUCTO." It took him several months, but he eventually cleared out all the horrifically pastel creatures that infested his new home.

Mini Omake By Tommy King

Harry awoke, shook his head, worked a pinky in his ear not believing what he was

hearing but yes it was

"I love you, you love me.."

"AVADA KEDAVRA" he shouted

Later he wished he hadn't done it, he really didn't want the fame, but the thank

you letters from parents all over his new world made it all worthwhile.

Omake by hatten\_jc (from my habit of spelling lungs as lounges)

The question hang in the air uncomfortable what was the Furniture doing in there.

Voldemort "I would like to know that to"

Behind the other Order of the fried chicken Fred and George grinned a perfect prank.

Wonder what Fudge would say once he discover all the Dementors of Azkaban was hiding in his toilet.

Or what Harry Potter would say finding out his room was now a Vela colony.

Omake by Daenerys (Harry takes polyjuice and replaces or imperios Lucius Malfoy)

In other news, a shocking announcement by Lord Lucius Malfoy rocked the

Wizengamot today.

After the confession of once more having succumbed to the Imperius curse,

Lord Malfoy has remained out of sight and remained quiet until he resumed

his ancestral seat this morning. He consistently abstained from all voting,

which surprised more than one of the august body. Several initiatives that

he himself had suggested were brought up, after several months of

hesitations and procedural mistakes had prevented their voting, they were

struck down without the support of the votes controlled by Lord Malfoy.

While surprising, it was only when new business was called for that Lord

Malfoy truly amazed everyone.

Once again Lord Malfoy indicated his reluctant and forced membership in the

terrorist organisation the "Death Eaters". He indicated that this second

occurrence had shaken him considerably, to the point where he was unsure just

what had been done under his own thoughts, and what had been guided by the

dark lord Riddle. Astonishingly, he mentioned that he had found a way to

ensure that he never fell for such tricks again.

In front of the press, the Wizengamot and the public, Lord Lucius Malfoy

swore an oath on both his life and his magic never to support the dark lord,

or allow the dark lord to influence him ever again.

To the amazement of all, this oath took immediate effect, not on Lord Malfoy

himself, but on the faded mark on his arm. It issued a hideous green smoke,



and the Lord appeared in much pain as it crept upward. Lord Malfoy appeared

to beseech the gods silently as he looked upward, and the smoke slowly

turned black before evaporating from his head, followed by his immediate

collapse.

Healers arrived and were able to confirm that Lord Malfoy is in good health,

appearing to have been unharmed by the dramatic event.

This did not however, diminish even more shocks coming from the prestigious

house of Malfoy. Once Lord Lucius Malfoy was again able to stand on his own,

he motioned for quiet and continued with flabbergasting all of the British

Magical world.

Lord Malfoy, now forever out of the reach of the dark lord, called on Aurors

and Unspeakables to investigate his home. Upon questioning, Lord Malfoy told

them that while under the influence of the Imperius he had acquired many

dark objects. He requested that a full investigation of his manor be made,

as even he did not know all that he might have done while cursed.

The Minister of Magic, Rufus Scrimgeour, issued the following statement.

"I applaud the measures taken by Lord Malfoy to reassure the Wizengamot and

the greater wizarding world of his determination to end the influence of the

dark lord on his life. Following his magical oath, which has been examined

by the Unspeakables, I feel confident issuing a pardon for any actions he

may have taken while under the influence of the imperius curse."

Lord Malfoy's surprises had not ended however. With an obvious heavy heart,

he continued to make history.

"I supported a dark lord while under the influence of one of the three most

foul curses that have ever been known. Under that influence, I enacted the

policies and wishes of the caster, while struggling under the shame this

brought me as the head of the Malfoy family. Most disappointing to me

however, was not what was done by myself under the control of someone else,

but what my son did willingly and under no control whatsoever. My heart

cried out as he knelt before another, and willingly and happily took the

hideous mark that I have only just managed to rid myself of.

It is with a heavy heart that today I therefore dismiss Draco Malfoy from my

family."

With this last statement, what appeared to be a broken man was escorted by

his wife out of the ministry, before they both disappeared. When Lady

Black\* was asked about the disownment, she replied that the Malfoy family

would be focussed on creating a new heir. Lord Malfoy's was seen to smile

lovingly at his spouse at this comment.

For reactions to these events see Pages 8 - 12

For Dumbledore's comments see Page 7

For Lord Black's comments see Page 13

\* I'm unsure of the title results of a marriage on the title of a higher

female. Would Narcissa remain as the Lady Black, given that that title is

higher than Lady Malfoy, or would her rank remain the same, but with the

title Lady Malfoy?

## Nothing to Lose

Harry was beginning to get worried, every letter he'd sent out to his friends had been returned unopened. When he'd tried asking Hedwig what was going on she'd just replied with a mournful bark.

"Neville," Harry said suddenly. "Do you think you could get something to him, girl?"

"Preck," Hedwig agreed.

Harry jotted down a quick request for information and attached it to the owl's leg. "Wait a few minutes for a reply, please."

Hedwig affectionately nipped Harry's outstretched finger for a few moments before hopping off her perch and flying out the window to accomplish her task.

Harry watched until his friend had faded from sight before going down to take care of his chores. He was in the middle of his yard work when the sound of someone stepping on a twig caught his attention.

"Who's there?" Harry demanded. There was no reply to his query. "Who's there or I'll start hexing?" Harry said louder, his fingers closed around the grip of his wand.

"It's me," Remus said as he pulled the hood off his invisibility cloak.

"Remus," Harry sighed in relief, "you scared me."

"Sorry about that, Harry," Remus said with a forced smile.

"What are you doing here?" Harry asked intently. "Are you here to take me away from the Dursleys?"

"I'm here to keep an eye on you," Remus replied. "Can't take any chances, what with 'you-know-who' being back."

"I guess," Harry said slowly. "What can you tell me about the war? What's happening?"

"I shouldn't even be talking to you, Harry." Remus looked uncomfortable at the admission. "Just . . . just stay in your room for a couple more weeks and then we'll see what we can do, 'eh?"

"What about Ron and Hermione?" Harry persisted. "Do you know why they haven't been sending me any letters this year?"

"I really can't talk about that," Remus said slowly, "just wait a couple weeks, Harry."

"I understand," Harry said in a subdued voice. And he did, there was only one reason that his friends wouldn't write to him over the summer. He'd hoped that it wasn't true but Remus' response was confirmation enough for the boy. "I'll just . . . I'll just go back to my room then," Harry suggested. He turned his back and began walking back to the house.

Remus wanted to call out to the boy, wanted to tell him that everything would be alright and that he'd only have to wait a couple more weeks before he'd be with his friends again but he did not. In the end, Dumbledore's orders were more important than the duty he had to his dead friend's son.

|||||||

Harry returned to his room and waited until late that night for Hedwig to return. It wasn't until the sun began to turn the sky red that he sadly concluded that he'd sent his owl to her death, one more friend gone.

He really didn't have much to live for, Harry thought to himself as he stared at the wall dully, not anymore anyway. In the beginning, Hogwarts had been wonderful because of the promise it offered to learn magic and to have a relatively Dursley free year. After the first year though, after the first year it was the friendships he'd made that had caused his eagerness to go back. Friendships that had come to an end, friends that had died because of their relationship to him. What other reason did Voldemort have to target them so soon?

Harry let out a deep breath, Voldemort had deprived him of his main reason to keep on going. Harry thought it only fair to reply in kind, to destroy everything that Voldemort had spent so many years building up, to send a hundred Death Eaters to tell his friends that they hadn't been forgotten, to have his revenge.

He had his purpose, now all he had to do was figure out what he needed to make it happen. Harry spent another twenty minutes staring blankly at the wall before he had a sudden burst of inspiration. He knew what he needed, he knew how to make it happen.

Apparition can't be too hard if mediocre wizards like Dung could do it, Harry thought to himself, and it wasn't like he hadn't already done it once before. Harry's eyes unfocused as he concentrated on his destination. For a few seconds, nothing happened, then with a large pop, Harry disappeared.

|||||||

Tonks looked up in alarm when her trained ears caught something that sounded like magical transport. A quick check of the wards confirmed that her ears had to have been playing tricks on her and she soon settled down to wait out the rest of her shift.

|||||||

Harry waited in one of the passages under the school watching his father's map for hours until Filch was the only person in the castle.

Seizing his chance, Harry rushed through the castle and into the Hospital wing. He desperately hoped that Madame Pomfrey would forgive him for plundering her potions stores. Harry glanced down at his watch, didn't look like he had enough time to visit the dungeon before he had to leave, unless.

"Dobby," Harry called out.

"What is great Harry Potter sir doing in the castle in summer?" Dobby asked.

"Never mind that," Harry said quickly. "Could you do me a big favor, Dobby?"

"Dobby will do anything, Harry Potter sir?"

"Pack up any complete Potions that Snape has and bring them to me," Harry ordered.

"Yes, Harry Potter sir." Dobby popped out and returned a few minutes later with a large box. "Dobby also took Professor Snarky's book on potions uses."

"Great job, Dobby."

Tears welled in the elf's eyes. "Harry Potter sir is praising Dobby?"

"You deserve it," Harry said honestly. "Goodbye, Dobby."

"Goodbye, Harry Potter sir." The elf looked up mournfully, having caught the tone of finality in Harry's words. "Dobby won't be seeing Harry Potter sir again?"

"I don't know," Harry admitted. "Could you tell Pomfrey that I raided her stores?"

"Yes, Harry Potter sir."

Without a backward glance, Harry walked out of the Hospital wing and towards the nearest passage. Dobby watched the door Harry walked through until the school Healer returned, afraid that he'd seen the greatest wizard of the age for the last time.

"Dobby has a message for Prefessy Healer," Dobby said loudly.

"What is it?" Poppy asked.

"Prefessy Healer's potions are raided," Dobby announced before disappearing with a pop.

Alarmed, Poppy rushed to check her potions cabinet and was relieved to see that she still had fifty percent of her stock on hand. Grateful that whoever it was had left her enough of a reserve to deal with emergencies, Poppy pulled out her potion set and prepared to replenish her stock. Granted, she could just ask Severus to do it for her. Point of fact, it was part of the man's job description. Problem was, despite Dumbledore's assurances she could never bring herself to trust the man. Once a Death Eater, ever a Death Eater. She owed it to her patients to ensure that none of their potions had been tampered with.

|||||||

Harry had once heard that people lived and died because of Information. He gritted his teeth as another wave of pain emanated from his scar. He'd never appreciated how useful a connection to Voldemort could be before, never realized how much a window into his nemesis' mind could benefit him. Lives are saved and lost because of information, Harry intended to use his source to keep the good guys alive and see that many bad guys died.

|||||||

It was an initiation run. Several of the green recruits had been given over to an experienced follower from the first rise. Their task was to go out and eliminate a family of muggles. The leader had picked a city based on the fact that he did not like its name and sent his trainees out to find a suitable proving ground.

So intent were the Death Eaters on their target that none of them noticed the shadowy figure that dogged their movements.

"How about this house?" One of the new recruits whispered to the squad leader. "Six muggles, four of them children."

"Go in and . . ." he trailed off when one of the recruits collapsed. "Thinks of a little violence and the little baby collapses," the leader sneered. "The Dark Lord will not be pleased." He looked down and for a moment, gaped in shock at the rapidly expanding puddle of blood. "Ambush," he screamed as two more of his recruits fell to the ground.



“Retreat,” he screamed as the fourth curse neatly bisected another recruit.

Harry cautiously approached the four fallen Death Eaters and, after a moment of thought, hit each one in the neck with a cutting curse. Never hurt to be sure and he was past the point of being willing to take prisoners, or leave live enemies behind.

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The Duty Auror glanced down at the notice he'd received from the Improper Use of Magic Office. Seems they'd detected heavy magic use in a predominantly muggle area. A quick records check had confirmed the fact that there were no muggleborn students in the area so the entire case had been delivered to the Department of Magical Law Enforcement much too late to do anything about it.

“Hey dumb ass,” the Duty Auror called out. “Get your ass out of your rack. Time to earn your pay.”

“What's up?”

“Magic use in a muggle area, go dispel the Dark Mark and assess the damage.”

“I'll wake up my partner and we'll be on our way,” the Auror agreed.

|||||

Harry sat back and relaxed as the adrenaline wore off, taking the time to go over everything that had happened to find and correct any mistakes he may have made.

“Should have taken the leader first,” Harry noted to himself. “Also should have been quicker with my spells. Need to find some way to keep them from escaping.”

|||||

The two Aurors were pleasantly surprised when they arrived and did not immediately find a Dark Mark hovering over one of the houses.

"Check it out." He waved at the killing field where the Death Eaters had met their fate. "Not something you see every day."

"Not something I've seen ever," his partner replied.

"Notice me not charms?"

"On everything, bloody lucky the muggles haven't woken up yet and contaminated our crime scene."

"I'm happy enough with the fact that this lot learned what it was like to be on the other side for once."

"You check the area, I'll call in what we know."

"Right." The Auror made a quick walk through the area before returning to his partner's side.

"Now then, let's see what we can see, shall we?"

"We shall." He summoned the masks off the three Death Eaters that were laying face up.

"Know any of these three?"

"Nope."

"One left," he commented. The Auror turned the corpse over with the toe of his boot, another nudge removed the mask. "You know this one?"

"Must be a new recruit," his partner replied, "same as the other three."

"Guess the leader got away from . . . . uh . . ."

"Whatever happened to these bastards?" the other Auror suggested.

“Works for me.”

|||||

Harry woke up screaming. He glanced at the clock, two hours after he'd gone to sleep, didn't they ever bloody rest? He downed a stimulant potion, then another after a moment of hesitation. Madame Pomfrey had once told him that too many stimulant potions could lead to long term damage. He didn't have a long term, so he wasn't going to worry about the damage.

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They hadn't been long out of school before they'd married and started a family. Three years in her case, and two in his. They'd been happy in their little house by the sea, their first born was almost Hogwarts age and their second was growing like a weed. They'd shared heartfelt sighs of relief when the Prophet had assured them that the Dark Lord hadn't returned. That relief had turned to dread when the special edition had come out to inform the world that the 'Paper of Record' had made a small mistake when they'd stated that 'you-know-who' was gone for good.

They were both muggleborn, high on the list of targets. Though neither had been a particularly good student, they'd both done their best to fortify their little home. Hours of work, brushed aside in seconds when the Death Eaters came.

“Should we go in and root the mudbloods out?” One of the Death Eaters asked.

“And risk ourselves?” Another scoffed. “Burn the bloody place down, we'll get them when they come out or we'll have the pleasure of listening to their screams.

The husband and wife watched in horror as the Death Eaters overcame the fire prevention wards.

“Maybe . . . maybe I could distract them while you get out with the children?” The husband suggested hopefully.

"I . . . I . . ." the wife looked at her lover with tears in her eyes.

A sharp scream brought their attention back to the front yard. A dirty figure clad in bloody rags had arrived and was dueling the Death Eaters. Already, the bodies of three of their tormentors littered the ground.

"Retreat," one of the Death Eaters screamed in panic.

A dozen pops signaled the end of the battle. Their rescuer shot the house a look of longing before he too disappeared with a pop.

"Floo's back on," one of the children called out.

"I better go call this in," the wife said.

"Yeah," the husband agreed, "and I'd better make sure the fires are out."

"I love you."

"I love you too."

The Aurors arrived within minutes to take their statements and clean up the bodies that littered their front lawn.

"Could you give us a description of the man who saved you?" The Auror asked.

"He looked . . . he looked . . ." the husband glanced at his wife with a look of helplessness on his face.

"Like he was about to die," the woman said without hesitation.

"Yes," the husband agreed, "like a walking corpse."

"What?"

"He was gaunt and his hair was tangled and dirty," the man began, "he . . . his skin was pale and waxy."

"He was dressed in rags," the wife chipped in, "and it didn't look as if he'd shaved in a couple days."

"What color was his hair?"

"Looked like it was black," the man replied, "but as dirty as it was . . ." he trailed off.

"I'm sorry we couldn't be more help," the wife said quickly.

"No, no this fits with what we've learned at the other scenes."

"There have been other attacks?"

"And your hero's arrived each time to save the targets," the Auror replied with a grin. "So far it's good guys; fifteen, bad guys; zero."

"Do you know who he is?"

"No, but you'll have to wait in line to thank him after we figure it out." The Auror closed his book. "I'll have some people from the department come here later to reinforce your wards."

"Thank you."

IIIIIIII

Harry chugged another potion, he wasn't sure how long it'd been since he'd had a decent meal or a good night's rest. He'd foiled five attacks since he'd started his one man crusade against the Dark Lord and had killed at least a dozen Death Eaters. Harry groaned as another vision came. The pain was becoming more manageable. Or perhaps the dull ache of a dozen poorly treated injuries was shorting out his ability to process it all. Shrugging the thought off as unimportant, Harry downed a pain relieving potion before making his preparations for the battle to come.

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Amelia knew she was outclassed within seconds of beginning her duel with the Dark Lord. Sure she'd managed to get in some good hits, but it was obvious that the Dark Lord was toying with her.

"Any last words?" Voldemort demanded.

"When you get to hell, I'll be waiting," Amelia said defiantly. Above all else, she was determined not to show an ounce of fear.

"How droll. Av . . ." Voldemort swayed to the side to avoid a sickly yellow curse. "Who dares . . ."

"Reducto," the mystery wizard incanted. "Moriator, aduro, pungo, pupugi, punctum."

"Potter," Voldemort growled, "Avada Kedavra."

Harry levitated a piece of rubble into the path of the incoming curse and banished several more at his opponent.

Amelia watched in awe as the two powerhouses traded blow after blow. It soon became sadly apparent that despite an impressive amount of natural ability, the Potter boy was being slowly worn down over the course of the fight.

"Aurors," one of the Death Eaters called out, "Aurors arriving."

"Next time, Potter, next time," Voldemort spat. The dark wizard disappeared with a pop.

"Next time," Harry agreed. He glared down at the spot that his nemesis had so recently occupied. He turned his head and gazed over at Amelia. "Are you alright, Director Bones?" he asked in a soft, concerned voice.

"I'll live," Amelia replied sardonically. "So what brings you to this part of England?"

"Revenge," Harry said simply. He turned away and reached into his pocket.

"Wait," Amelia called out as the boy disappeared.

"Director Bones?" a field healer called out as she rushed to her boss's side. "Do you know what spells you got hit with?"

"Nothing too serious," Amelia replied, "a couple broken bones." She gave a pained laugh. "My rescuer arrived before they were able to do use the killing curse."

"Signs of repeated crucio," the woman muttered.

"A touch never hurt anyone," Amelia said with a wave. "They didn't use it enough to do any permanent damage."

"Scene's clear, Boss." The commander of the quick reaction force reported. "Orders?"

"Get me to the department infirmary, recall all off duty personnel, and tell forensics that I want them to go over this with a fine toothed comb."

"Yes, boss."

"Oh, and see if you can produce Harry Potter for me, I'd like to have a word with the boy."

"Produce?" the man's eyebrows raised. "In what way?"

"Alive, unharmed, and in a good mood. Make sure he knows that he's not on the hook for anything."

"Yes, Boss."

IIIIIIII

Harry hissed in pain as he pulled another fragment of something out of his side. He wasn't sure how much longer he'd be able to continue

his crusade. Harry took several deep breaths before downing half a dozen potions to heal his injuries. If he didn't have much more time, then so be it, he was determined to be as productively destructive as possible in the time he had left.

|||||

"Boss, you're not gonna like this." One of Amelia's forensic Healers announced as he walked into her office.

"What is it?"

"We've got the test results in from the blood Potter left at your house, it's ugly."

"Hit me."

"Looks like the boy's running on potions," the forensics man said thoughtfully. "Not even sure how the boy's still moving, let alone fighting."

"Damn it, put the word out that I want him found yesterday and have a medical team on standby."

"Yes, boss."

"Boss," another one of her underlings called out as he rushed into her office. The man handed Amelia a piece of paper. "You gotta take a look at this."

"Last Will and Testament of Harry James Potter," Amelia read aloud.

"We found this under a loose floorboard in the boy's room," the Auror reported. "It's bad boss, There's a cover letter that's basically a suicide note. It says he wants to be buried next to one of his best friends, says that he knows they were killed by Voldemort, says that . . . just read it boss."

"I wasn't aware that his relationship with Cedric Diggory was so close," Amelia murmured. "I . . ." she froze when she saw the names



on the page. "Find out if this is true," Amelia barked, "I can't believe that two Hogwarts students have been killed without our department's knowledge."

"Already on it, Boss."

"Well?"

"We can't find them, boss. Families say that they're alright though."

"I want them in my office and ready to talk yesterday," Amelia barked.

"Yes, Boss."

|||||||

Harry collapsed when he got back to his current hideout. Despite the pain and fatigue, there was a wide smile on the boy's face. For the first time ever, he'd managed to take the whole team of Death Eaters. Of the fourteen man strike team, not a single one had managed to escape. Granted, it had cost a pint of blood and three broken ribs, but Harry thought it was well worth it. He downed a couple more potions to replenish the blood and dull the pain. Now if only they'd hold off long enough to let him get a few hours of sleep.

|||||||

Amelia looked when one of her Aurors knocked on her door.

"What?" She growled.

"We've got Potter's friends," the Auror announced.

"Where were they?"

"Dumbledore was sitting on them," the Auror replied. "Tonks brought 'em in, Shack is still pretending that he doesn't know anything about it."

"Have Tonks sit in interrogation room four, arrest Shack and put him in holding cell nine."

"Yes, boss. What do you want us to do with Potter's friends?"

"Bring them here, I'll see them in my office."

"Yes, boss." The Auror disappeared and returned a few minutes later with Ron and Hermione.

"Have a seat," Amelia ordered. She checked her file. "Your names are Ronald Weasley and Hermione Granger, correct?"

"Yes, Madame Bones," Ron replied.

"You are both friends with Harry Potter, correct?"

"Yes, Madame Bones," Ron said respectfully.

"When was the last time you had any contact with him?" Amelia asked.

"We haven't . . . um . . ." Ron looked uncomfortable.

"We haven't had any contact with Harry since the Hogwarts express," Hermione said dully.

"Why not?" Amelia asked more sharply than she'd intended.

"Dumbledore . . . Dumbledore said that Harry didn't want to talk to us," Hermione sobbed. "We tried to write him but he never answered." The girl buried her face in her hands. "Why doesn't he want to speak with us, what's wrong with me?"

Ron patted his friend awkwardly on the back. "She even tried using the felley . . . er . . . Hermione . . ."

"I tried to call him on the phone but his relatives just told me that he didn't want to talk with me," Hermione said with a great shuddering

breath, "I've tried everything I could think of and there's never any reply."

"I see," Amelia said softly. She pulled a piece of parchment out of her desk and handed it to the girl. "Would you mind telling me what you think of this?"

AN: Polish by Silas Dunsmore, moncapitan2002, zambkptkn, bannerfirefly. Title by Jim - xinu and clell65619.

Disclaimer: Complete and utter bastard Dumbledore, doesn't see himself as a monster but then again, few monsters are honest enough to admit what they really are.

Just a Pawn

Hermione was sitting in the library when she was disturbed by the presence of her best friend.

"Come with me," Harry said abruptly.

"Harry, I'm in the middle of . . ."

"Now," Harry said firmly. "We're short on time and I need you to trust me."

"I trust you, Harry." Hermione's mouth was dry as she followed her best friend out of the library and through an maze of hallways until they reached a large mirror.

"Carpe Cerevisi," Harry said loudly causing the mirror to move aside. "Get in and don't come out until I come get you," Harry ordered.

"Harry, what's this . . ."

"Make sure it's me and hex the hell out of anyone else," Harry said firmly. "Understand?"

"I understand," Hermione agreed. "Harry, what's going . . ."

"Hide now, answers later." Harry closed up the passage leaving Hermione in darkness.

Hermione spent several uncomfortable minutes in the dark waiting for her friend to return, and when she did she was ready to give him a piece of her mind.

"Harry Potter," she growled as the mirror opened. "You . . ."

"What did I tell you," Harry interrupted.

"To make sure it was you," Hermione said sullenly.

"And what didn't you do?" Harry demanded.

Hermione sighed in exasperation. "Fine . . . uh . . . how did we save Sirius?"

"With a time turner, and next time phrase it in a way that won't incriminate you of aiding and abetting an escaped felon."

"What's going on, Harry?" Hermione asked plaintively.

"You and I are going to have a word with Dumbledore," Harry said in a tired voice. "And then I suspect you'll get your answers. Come on."

She fell into step behind Harry and followed him up to the Headmaster's office.

"Open or I'll destroy you," Harry growled at the gargoyle as they approached. To Hermione's surprise, it immediately sprang aside.

Hermione had to run to keep up with Harry as he took the final steps three at a time until he burst into Dumbledore's office.

"Harry m'boy, to what do I owe the pleasure?" Dumbledore asked with a grandfatherly smile.

"Why don't you tell Hermione what Draco had in store for her?" Harry said coldly.

"I'm afraid I have no idea what you're . . ." Dumbledore began.

"Save it," Harry barked.

"It was necessary to keep his cover," Dumbledore said softly. "I was assured that she would be returned alive."

"What's going on?" Hermione asked nervously. "What was Draco going to do?"

“Draco promised to provide entertainment for several of the older Slytherin boys,” Harry said without taking his eyes off the Headmaster. “Guess who the entertainment was going to be?”

“But . . . I . . .” Hermione looked lost.

“I assure you that you'd have been returned none the worse for wear and you would not have remembered a thing,” Dumbledore spoke up. “And you can console yourself that it would have gone a long way to establishing Mr. Malfoy's cover as . . .”

“None the worse for wear,” Hermione screamed. “Have you ever done this to me before?”

“This would have been the first time,” Dumbledore assured the girl.

“Harry?” Hermione asked, afraid of the answer.

“It's never happened to you, so far as I can tell anyway and you don't show any signs of having your memory tampered with.” He turned to glare at Dumbledore. “That's not to say he hasn't allowed it to happen to other girls.”

“You make me sound like a monster,” Dumbledore sighed. “You're familiar with chess, are you not, Ms. Granger?”

“Yes,” Hermione agreed. She took a step to the side, placing Harry between her and the Headmaster.

“Then you know that one must sometimes sacrifice a pawn to take a more valuable piece, or in this case, to place a valuable piece with the enemy.”

“That's all I am to you?” Hermione screamed. “A pawn?”

“Mr. Malfoy's value as a spy can not be overstated,” Dumbledore said angrily. “Can't you . . .”

“Could,” Harry interrupted.

"What?" Dumbledore asked dumbly.

"Could not," Harry said with the first smile he'd had since he'd uncovered the whole sick plot. "I'm afraid that the Polyjuice will have worn off by now, and I can't imagine that his customers were happy with the switch."

"My god Harry, what have you done?" Dumbledore asked sickly.

"You tried to sacrifice one of mine," Harry said coldly. "I returned the favor with two of yours."

"Two of . . . my god, what have you done to Severus?" Dumbledore stared at the boy in horror.

"You'll have to find out from one of your other spies," Harry said cruelly. "If you have any left that is."

"Harry, how could you?"

"It was easy," Harry replied. "All I had to do is follow your example."

Dumbledore whipped out his wand before either teen could hope to react. "Obliviate."

"Was something supposed to happen?" Harry asked with a grin.

"Obliviate." The old wizard tried again.

"Finite," Harry incanted.

The old wizard was canny enough to drop his wand as it began to transform into its natural shape. "An adder?" He asked dryly.

"Would have been more deadly but I didn't have time to be picky," Harry replied. "Come on, Hermione, we're going."

The two walked in silence for several minutes until Hermione recovered enough to speak. "Thank you, Harry."

"What're friends for?" Harry replied with a weak grin. "You going to be okay?"

"Not until I leave this place for good," Hermione replied. "To think that he was willing to let me be . . ."

"He might have been, I wasn't." Harry reached over and squeezed her shoulder. "Can you do something for me, Hermione?"

"Anything," Hermione said immediately. "My life, my magic, my knowledge, it's all yours to use." The tip of her wand glowed, sealing the vow.

"I need you to hold it together for just a couple more hours," Harry said gently. "After that, you can cry, scream, do whatever you want. But for now, I need you to be strong for me, okay?"

"Okay, Harry," Hermione agreed.

"Come on, we've got a meeting to get to."

"With who?"

"Dumbledore isn't the only one that put spies in Slytherin," Harry replied with a grin. "How else do you think I found out what Draco was planning to do to you?"

"Oh."

She nearly ran into him when he made an abrupt stop. "I've got a lovely bunch of coconuts," he said softly.

"And I've got the number forty one," a female voice replied from the shadows.

"Can you confirm that both targets have been rendered harmless?" Harry asked seriously.

"Mmmmm, confirmed," the voice purred.



“Have everyone pack,” Harry ordered. “We're going.”

“Now?”

“I'm not about to leave any of my assets behind,” Harry replied. “Everyone packs, everyone goes. Understood?”

“Yes, boss,” the voice mocked with a faint trace of relief in her voice.

“Good.” Harry smiled. “And good work, all of you.”

“Thank you, boss,” the voice replied with a note of pleasure. “And let me tell you how much fun it was to give the bastard a taste of his own medicine.”

“I want all of you to meet me at the statue of Gregory the Smarmy in two hours, repeat it.”

“We will all meet you at the statue of Gregory the Smarmy in two hours,” she said quickly.

“Good work, and get packing.”

“Yes, boss.”

The two teens heard the sounds of footsteps retreating.

IIIIIIIIII

Hogwarts, three years earlier:

'Wars are won and lost based on information,' the thought hit Harry like a bolt of lightning. Over the next few days and weeks, he constantly found himself going back to the idea, refining it, trying to find a way to bring his vision to reality. He already had Hermione to plumb the depths of Hogwarts library, what he needed was eyes and ears in the other houses, but how to get them?

“Dobby,” Harry called out.

"You is calling Dobby, Harry Potter sir?" The little elf was bouncing up and down.

"Can you get into the Slytherin dorms without being noticed?"

"Yes, Harry Potter sir," Dobby agreed quickly.

"Then, here's what I want you to do . . ."

IIIIIIIIII

"Fred, George," Harry called out. "I need to talk with you."

"What's up, Harry?" One of the twins asked.

"I need a favor," Harry replied. "I'm not sure you'll like it."

"After what you did for Ginny last year, well . . ."

". . . there is very little you can ask that the Weasley family won't cheerfully give."

"We owe you, Harry."

"And Weasleys always pay their debts."

"So what do you need?"

"I need to know who you're going to prank ahead of time," Harry said quickly. "Well, I need to know when you're going to do a big prank on one of the other houses that would get a lot of people at once."

"That all?" Fred laughed.

"No problem," George agreed.

"I'd also like you to do a big one on the Slytherins," Harry added. "Big, messy, humiliating, and disgusting."

"They do something to annoy you?" Fred asked curiously.

"Nothing big," Harry admitted. "I just need . . . do you guys mind if I keep it close to my chest for a little while?"

"No problem, Harry."

"We don't need to know any details that you don't want to share."

"Thanks guys, I really appreciate this."

|||||

One moment she was walking down the hallway to the Slytherin Dungeons, the next she found herself waking in a dark room with no idea how she got there.

"Who's there?" She called out nervously. "You'd better hope I never find out who you are," she growled. "I'll . . ."

"Quiet," Harry barked.

"What do you want with me?" She demanded.

"I want to do you a favor," Harry replied honestly.

"What kind of favor?" She asked suspiciously.

"Don't go to breakfast next Monday."

"That's it?"

"That's a taste," he replied.

"What's in it for you?"

"I'd like to get another source of information in the Slytherin dorms," Harry replied. "You can provide that to me."

"What sort of information?"

"We can discuss that later."

"What's in it for me?"

"You provide me with information, and I'll return the favor."

"What if I say no?"

"Then I'm afraid that I'll have to report the fact that you stole last month's Transfiguration exam," Harry said in a tone filled with regret. "I wonder if they'll expel you for it."

"How . . . how did you know about that?" She asked fearfully.

"You really shouldn't put incriminating statements in your diary," Harry replied. "So you know."

"You bastard," she screamed. "How dare you." Despite her show of anger, she was more than a little impressed by the implications of his statement. If he had access to the Slytherin girls' dorms, then who knows what else he could do.

"Do we have a deal?"

"We have the beginnings of one," she replied. "Who are you?"

"Why don't we leave that discussion for another day?" Harry suggested. "Put a green sock under your pillow when you want to meet again and I'll set up another face to face."

Hogwarts, one year later:

"It's dragons," Harry said calmly.

"What?"

"The first task," Harry explained. "We're to take something away from dragons."

“Oh . . .”

“The second takes place underwater, and the third is a maze.”

“How do you know these things?” Cedric asked.

Harry ignored the question. “That's not the question you need to ask.”

“What's the question I need to ask then?”

“Why are you telling me this?” Harry replied.

“Why are you telling me this?” Cedric repeated with a grin.

“For one, I'd like you to pass on any rumors you hear in the Hufflepuff Common Room or in the Prefect meetings,” Harry said. Never hurt to have multiple sources after all. “For another, more importantly.”

“Yes?”

“Is it true that you're dating Cho?”

“Yeah,” Cedric agreed. “Why?”

“I'd like you to lean on her, I want her to get her house to stop picking on one of the third years.”

“And if I refuse?” Cedric asked. “Just curious.”

“The information is the carrot,” Harry said simply. “You don't want to know what the stick is.”

“What's the name of the third year?” Cedric sighed.

Hogwarts, eighteen months later:

Luna looked up at the traitor with an unreadable expression on her face. “How would you like to get that word off your forehead?”

“What?” Marietta asked dumbly.

"The word," Luna repeated. "Unless you've become attached to it of course."

"What do I need to do?" Marietta asked quickly.

"Nothing you haven't done before," Luna said in an airy voice. "You're going to have to sign another contract of course." Luna smiled. "The consequences for violating this one are much worse then simply getting branded."

Hogwarts, six months later:

"Got some information for you boss," she said as she sat down to their meeting. "You're not going to like it."

"What is it?"

"Draco is rounding up a group of boys to, quote; break in Potter's mudblood."

"Can you get me a vial of Veratiserum?"

"It's in my pocket boss."

"Does he have a gap in his schedule that'll let us disappear him for a few hours?"

"No, but we've got polyjuice and someone that really doesn't want his father to know that he bats for both teams."

"Set it up."

"Yes, boss."

AN: Don't expect to see anymore of this for a while if ever. I really want to work through a few of the many half done fics on my HD before taking up another project. If I were to write this, I'd interspace what's happening with flashbacks on how Harry built his network. Typos busted by; fhacklander, Helmut, greenzxz, outter13.

## Omake: Why Dumbledore Lived

"You're wondering why I didn't do anything to Dumbledore aren't you?" Harry asked. "Especially considering what I did to Draco and Snape."

"The thought had crossed my mind," Hermione admitted.

"I was able to keep the old fool from lashing out at us," Harry sighed. "The wards in his office kept me from showing him what I thought of what he was going to do to you."

## Omake By bjdibbins

Hmmm, I have another idea on how this could have gone.. What if Harry had approached Dumbledore before Draco's party started?

"...I assure you that you'll be returned none the worse for wear and you will not remember a thing," Dumbledore spoke up. "And you can console yourself that it will go a long way to establishing Mr. Malfoy's cover as . . ."

"Hermione is not going to be volunteering, so you'll need a new plan to boost Malfoy's cover." Harry told the headmaster coldly.

"But it is too late to change the plan now. Hermione must be there, or-"

"Fine! Hermione, I need a hair please." Harry asked, holding out his hand.

He took a large hip flask he brought out of his pocket, and unscrewing the lid, dropped the hair Hermione gave him into it.

"Now, Headmaster, if you believe your plan is so vital, then you'll drink this Polyjuice potion and take Hermione's place at Draco's revel. I'll even obliviate you afterwards if you like. but if you'd rather not, I do have an alternative option..."

"What is that, Harry?"

"You can volunteer for some practical research in the effectiveness of using Skele-grow in healing multiple broken bones in elderly wizards, and I'll give the polyjuice to Snape instead!"

Omake By snipehunt2

"Obliviate." The old wizard tried again.

"Finite," Harry incanted.

The old wizard was canny enough to drop his wand as it began to transform into it's natural shape. "An adder?" He asked dryly.

"Would have been more deadly but I didn't have time to be picky,"

Dumbeldore noticed that Harry's wand was pointed at his head "now Harry my boy.."

Only to be hit with a wordless petrificus totalis

"I'm sure you understand that this is just to keep you from doing it again. It's for the Greater Good.. REDUCTO"

Omake: It was only after his Queen and Pawn had left that he noticed that he wasn't in his normal body, but that of Ginny Weasley. How they managed to slip him polyjuice without his noticing he had no idea.

Leaving his office, he was confronted by a group of Slytherins that just happened to be walking by.

The leader said "Well, what have we here? The blood traitor that was promised to us. You're not going to get away this time. We're going to be having SO much fun together..."

Omake For different Chapters of Odd Ideas

Omake for Nothing to Lose (Odd Ideas #102)



Ron felt helpless as he guided Hermione to her room. The girl had been inconsolable since their meeting with Madame Bones. He took a couple deep breaths, and suddenly, in a flash he knew what he had to do. Ron felt like he was an observer in his own body as he walked into the Order meeting.

"Ronald, go back up stairs."

He ignored his mother's instructions as he walked up to the head of the table.

"Albus Dumbledore," Ron said formally. "I challenge you to a duel."

"What?" Molly screamed. The rest of the Order just stared at the boy in shock.

"To the death," Ron added.

"I refuse," Dumbledore said formally. "My dear boy, what's this . . ."

"Then let this be a warning," Ron interrupted. "If Harry dies, then I won't grant you the courtesy of a challenge." With that, Ron spun on his heel and marched out of the room.

IIIIIIIIII

"Boss," A breathless Auror barged into Amelia's office.

"What is it?" Amelia demanded.

"It's Potter," the man said quickly.

"What about him?" Amelia held her breath while she waited for the answer.

"He's gone on the offensive," the Auror replied. "Malfoys, Flints, and Carrows are gone."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Potter killed them all and . . ."

"Chief," another Auror called out. "I've got someone here you're gonna want to have a word with."

"Oh?" Amelia raised an eyebrow. "Who?"

"Me," the Head of the Greengrass family said bluntly. "Unless you'd like to tell your Aurors to let me go."

"He was on the scene of Potter's latest attack," the Auror said helpfully. "Says he saw the whole thing."

"Step into my office," Amelia said calmly.

"Said the Auror to the . . ." he trailed off.

"What?" Amelia prompted.

"I try not to make a habit of making statements that could be incriminating," he replied with an easy smile.

"Care to explain what happened?" Amelia asked.

"Care to offer me immunity," the scion of the Greengrass family retorted.

"What are we talking about?" Amelia asked. "Hypothetically speaking."

"Hypothetically?" He mused. "Oh, I'd say several counts of trafficking in illegal potions components. Perhaps a couple more of tax evasion and several more of smuggling."

"No murder or anything to do with Death Eaters?" Amelia asked intently.

"Aside from a normal business relationship?"

"Aside from that, yes."

"Then no murder or association with Death Eaters beyond what was necessary to sell potions ingredients to men I knew or suspected to be Death Eaters."

"Alright then," Amelia agreed, "I'll agree to overlook any nonviolent crimes such as tax evasion, smuggling, trafficking in illegal items, and the like."

"Thank you," he sighed.

"So what happened?"

"I was making a rather large sale to twelve Death Eaters," Greengrass began. "I do not know what it is, but the box is still in my sitting room if you'd like to confiscate it."

"I'll send some men, continue."

"Six of them died in a moment," he said in an admiring voice. "One minute they were joking and the next they were dead, it was amazing."

"Potter?"

"Revealed himself and began dueling the other six." He laughed. "My dueling instructor used to say that skill beats speed and power. He was wrong. Potter didn't use many spells and he was a bit sloppy with the ones he did, but my god the power." He shook his head in wonder. "Not to mention the fact that the boy's reflexes are inhuman."

"What happened next?"

"They hit Potter with one of the unforgivables," he replied.

"Which one?"

"I don't know."

"How can you not know?" Amelia asked with a frown.

"Because I saw them cast several more throughout the rest of the fight and I saw all three connect more than once," Greengrass replied. "He shrugged off the crucio like it was nothing, wasn't slowed by the imperio, and I'm not sure he even noticed when he was hit by the killing curse. It was like something out of a legend."

"I see, what were you doing?"

"Hiding under a table and hoping that I didn't get hit," he said honestly. "Potter killed each of his opponents and turned to me. I thought I was going to die but he just squinted at my face for a few seconds and turned away. I called out and to my surprise, he stopped."

"Did he say anything?"

"He thanked me after I gave him a chance to plunder my potions cabinet, and again when I had a house elf prepare a meal to go."

"Why did you do that?"

"I like to stay on the good side of wizards that possess the power to extinguish my family line," he explained. "It is the reason I got into the import business."

"Oh?"

"I'm much more valuable as an independent without a mark than I would be as a follower." He gave a tight smile. "So long as the deliveries are on time, my family is left alone."

"I see."

"Not to mention the opportunities it gives me to gain valuable contacts in other places, places far from the conflict at home."

"Then why are your daughters in Hogwarts?"

"My clients would get nervous if they thought I was preparing to flee the country," he sighed. "The girls both wear portkeys at all times, activating one will activate them both."

"Thank you for your time, Mr. Greengrass."

"A pleasure to be of some service to the Director of Magical Law Enforcement."

|||||

Harry squinted at the pages in the Drug reference manual as he tried to figure out the right combination of painkillers and stimulants. The potions were beginning to lose their effectiveness and so he'd been forced to turn to modern pharmaceuticals to keep going.

AN: Not satisfied with how it came out, in my defense I am running on almost no sleep.

Omake For Sands of time by Anime Monster: SG-1 (someone had to do it)

It wasn't unusual for the stargate to activate for no apparent reason, troubling was the fact that the iris refused to engage and the ninth chevron actually engaged, causing half the base (NORAD, not that anyone cared) to lose power. A moment after the stargate engaged a person came shooting out of it, landing at the base of the ramp. The stargate disengaged and the figure stood up, spinning dizzily on the spot. He held up a finger as if trying to get the world to wait on the spinning and said, "Did anyone get the plate on that lorrey?" before falling face forward in a dead faint.

"Well, that's not something you see everyday..." Daniel said, getting blank looks from the rest of the crew in the dialing room. "Well, maybe not around here," he amended.

I've been sitting on that since you posted the DC one on Y-Group. It feels good to get it out.

An Omake (Crossover with StarTrek) by Celebwen Telcontar

The white owl gripped the Time Turner in her beak. With a flourish, she

tipped it over and over, seeing the world spin out of time before her. It

took many turnings until she got to where she needed to go, but this would be

best. The other ideas she had wouldn't get her beloved master away from the

Land of No Bacon, as she had seen.

As the turner finished spinning, she tossed the lengthy chain about her claw

multiple times, clutching the actual Time Turner in her talon. She hooted as

she launched herself off of the parapet of the now-decimated and

highly-radioactive castle. India was waiting for her, and so was Kahn Noonien

Singh. If he couldn't help her, then perhaps the Chrysalis Project's

people could. Inserting foreign DNA into the old meddler's body would be

humorous. She glided over the ruined landscape of England, seeing smoke still

rising from craters. A few government helicopters thumped by her, and she

snuck aboard one. This would cut her journey by half the time.

As the helicopters came over Dheli, she launched herself out of it, gliding

down in circles. She was surprised how dark it was here, she didn't realize

that helicopters could go this fast.

:What are you doing here?: a voice asked her.

:I am trying to save my master, she replied to the strange voice. :What is

your name?:

:Isis. If you really want to help, get Ramses. He's a friend of your master's friend, the one with heavy fur.:

:You mean Crookshanks?: Hedwig asked Isis.

:Yes, I mean Crookshanks.:

:How do you know this?:

:I just do. Now, land on this windowsil.: Isis sent Hedwig an image of a

windowsil right below her. The owl did so, and found herself facing an ebony

cat with golden eyes who had a sack in her mouth. :This has DNA sequencing

from what you call a Puffskien, an ancient and horrible, yet tasty, alien.

They reproduce like mad. Feed it to the old man. He will start going mad,

then produce Puffskiens. Understand?:

:Understood.:

:Good luck, Hedwig.:

:And you, Isis. How did you know my name?!:

:I know everything.: Hedwig took the small sachel in her beak, then began to

turn her Time Turner over and over again. Soon the city of Dheli was back to

its modern self, and Hedwig flew away to England once again.

As Hedwig laced the cup with the DNA sequence, she heard a subtle purring

sound. The drink would be taken by the Headmaster, and all Hell would break

loose!

The Headmaster took a sip, Fawkes looking at him derisively. Slowly, the

Headmaster began to turn a rather ugly shade of custard. He began to humm and

purr, eating everything in sight. He turned brilliant yellow as he ate an

entire dish of lemon drops, and he began purring again. Something appeared

behind him, and Hedwig looked closely at the white Puffskien. It purred and

squeaked, then settled down. Hedwig went back to the owlry to sleep.

When morning came, Hedwig went to see Harry. Puffskiens filled the Great



Hall, sending a resounding rumble through the hall. Hedwig chuckled, clicking

her beak.

:I'll go get a Crumple Horned Snorkak,: Fawkes suggested. Hedwig nodded.

One of them would be good. Fawkes vanished, only to return with a man who had

a beard and a brow ridge. He got a look of pain about his face, and the

puffskiens went mad. They started screeching like dying rabbits, shaking

violently.

“Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop the puffskiens!! Get the Snorkak away from here! Get it away! Make it leave!” Dumbledore cried, tearing and hiding behind Minerva’s chair, his voice a high-pitched squeal.

:Then don’t send Harry back to the Dursleys,: Fawkes said. Dumbledore

looked over at his familiar from behind Minerva’s chair, and shook his head.

“Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop

it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it!

Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it!

Stop it!” he screeched over and over, not stopping except to breathe for a

good ten or so minutes. The students started trickling into the Great Hall,

and sending Puffskiens everywhere. The Snorkak joined in the eating, Fawkes

sitting on his shoulder, at the Gryffindor table.

Crookshanks came in, bringing a Puffskien with it, and set it on Dumbledore's

plate before attacking Dumbledore himself, his scythe-like claws drawing an

obscene amount of blood and causing the Headmaster to screech like a maddened

rat.

This went on for days. The Snorkak always joined Gryffindor and spoke with

Harry, sometimes with Ron and Hermione. He had Fawkes with him all the time.

"Will you be my son?" the Snorkak asked after three weeks of the routine.

Hedwig hooted in satisfaction. A Snorkak, in point of fact a very

high-ranking one, would take Harry as his son, and the old man wouldn't take

Harry back to the Land of No Bacon. All would be well.

This was just a bit of randomness that dribbled out of my brain after seeing

the episode Trouble with Tribbles again and reading "The Eugenics Wars" by

Gary Cox. Isis belongs to him.

CT

(Snorkak: Klingon. Puffskien: Tribble)

Disclaimer: Another Batch of Omake.

Omake: Unforgettable

Harry frowned as an old crumpled note fell out of his pocket. "What's this?" He mumbled to himself as he unfolded it. "Research counter to obliviate?" The note was in his hand writing but he didn't remember ever making it.

He carefully replaced it in his trunk and went down to the common room to find his friends. Hermione was easy enough to find, she was in her usual spot in front of the fireplace with a big book propped up on her lap. But Ron was nowhere to be found.

"He's in the hospital wing," Hermione said after Harry asked her. "Did something stupid and now Madame Pomfrey wants to keep him there for the weekend to make sure there won't be any complications."

"Oh." Harry wasn't sure why he got a shot of adrenaline after hearing those words. "Could you give me a little help with a project?"

Hermione carefully marked her place and put the book down to give Harry her full attention. "What project?"

"I want to find a counter for the obliviate charm," Harry replied.

A frustrated frown appeared on Hermione's face. "I know I've seen it somewhere but I can't think of where it would be." She rose from her seat. "Come on."

Harry followed the girl to the school library and watched in amazement as she headed straight to a shelf in the restricted section.

"What are you doing?" He hissed.

"I've got permission," Hermione replied. She examined the shelf for a few minutes. "That's odd?"

"What's odd?" Harry asked.

"There's an empty spot on the shelf." She leaned in for a closer look. "It's where the book we're looking for should be."

"So someone checked it out," Harry said with a shrug.

"Quite some time ago," Hermione replied. "Look at all the dust."

"Oh?" Harry sighed. "So we're not going to finish that project then?"

"Maybe." Hermione pulled a book off the shelf with a look of triumph on her face. "Then again, maybe not." She shot her friend a grin. "Someone messed up the order of the books, this one isn't where it's supposed to be."

"Oh." Harry let out a breath he didn't know he was holding. "Now what?"

"Now you give me a couple minutes to research," Hermione replied.

"I'll keep a look out," Harry agreed.

Hermione rolled her eyes at the dramatics and set to reading. "Okay," she spoke up a few minutes later. "This all seems clear enough, take a look Harry."

They spent the next several minutes practicing the counter-charm until they were both sure they could perform it.

"That was easy," Hermione reflected. "It's almost like we've done this before."

"Not funny," Harry grumbled. "Now hold still and . . ."

"Oh no, I'm not letting you try some strange spell on me, Harry Potter." She pulled out her wand. "Now hold still, this shouldn't hurt a bit and I'm interested to see if it will or not."

"I hate you," Harry grumbled.

"Ready?"

"Let's get it over with," Harry grumbled.

"A-lethe-ia," Hermione incanted.

The effect was instantaneous. Harry fell to his knees and emptied his stomach out all over her shoes and didn't stop heaving even after it was clear that there was nothing left in his stomach.

"Oh god, I'm sorry, Harry." Hermione was close to tears. "It's not supposed to do that. I'll go get Madame Pomfrey."

He captured her ankle in an unbreakable hold. "NO," he said with such urgency that she immediately froze. "The spell worked." He cleaned the mess up with a couple flicks of his wand. "And it's your turn."

"No thank you," she said nervously. Not wanting to experience the apparent side effects.

"A-lethe-ia," Harry hit her with the spell before she had a chance to protest further.

"Harry," Hermione sobbed. She buried her face in his shoulder cried into it.

"I'm gonna kill Ron," Harry said calmly. "That's the only way Dumbledore could know what we've been doing."

"What's the worst thing you remember?" Hermione asked fearfully.

"What?"

"I remember Professor Snape cornering me in an empty classroom and trying to . . . Harry if you hadn't rescued me." She broke down again.

"That's the worst thing I remember too," he said firmly, closing the subject. A sudden horrible thought occurred to him. "There weren't any other times, were there, times when I wasn't there to stop him?"

The bastard was already going to die, Harry just needed to know how slow he was going to make it.

"No," Hermione assured him. "I guess you hurt him badly enough to scare him off."

"Good."

"But how many other girls . . ." She trailed off.

"We'll deal with that later," Harry promised her. "Come on."

"Where are we going?"

"Back to Gryffindor tower," Harry replied. "We need to get packed and then we're getting out of here."

"What about Ron?" Hermione asked softly.

"We'll pay him a visit on the way out," Harry promised her. A very short visit.

They raced back to the tower and quickly threw their things together before meeting back in the common room.

"Wait," Hermione commanded. She cast a quick spell and then tore through their trunks, seemingly pulling out and discarding things at random. "Tracking charms," she explained. After a moment, she hit Harry with another charm. "And you're going to have to leave your glasses behind."

"Any on you?"

She hit herself with the charm and blushed deeply. "Just a second." She disappeared behind him for a minute and deposited a pair of hello kitty panties on top of the pile of discarded items. "Let's go."

Harry checked the map carefully as they entered the hospital wing. "Pomfrey is out, we need to make this quick."

"Right," Hermione agreed.

Ron sat up with an easy smile on his face when he saw his friends approach. "Hey guys, took you long enough to visit. I can't see why you're always complaining about this place, Harry. All the food you could ask for and no class."

"We recently found something out about you," Harry said flatly.

"What is it, mate?" Ron asked nervously.

"Do you know how many times we've been obliviated?" Harry demanded.

"Huh?" Ron was clearly puzzled by the direction the conversation had taken. "What are you talking about?"

"Hermione and I were just in the library researching a counter to the obliviate, again. Do you know what's different about this time compared to all the other times we've done it?" Harry growled. "You weren't there to run to Dumbledore afterwards."

"How could you, Ron?" Hermione sobbed. "How could you betray us like that?"

"I . . ." Ron stared down at his hands. "I don't remember ever betraying either of you." He took a deep shuddering breath. "There is . . . there is a list of several things that I'm supposed to report to Dumbledore if you ever do any of them but I don't remember ever doing it."

"But why?" Harry demanded. "You were supposed to be our friend."

"Dumbledore has a lot of influence over the Weasley family," Ron said reluctantly. "I'm sorry." He took another deep breath. "That's why you have to obliviate me, take everything from the last few hours and make me think I was asleep or something."

Harry turned to his only loyal friend. "Hermione," he barked.



"I'm not sure I can," Hermione admitted nervously. "I know the theory but . . ."

"What's the worst that can happen?" Ron interrupted.

"Lockheart," Hermione said simply.

"Do it," Ron ordered.

"But . . ." Hermione got a sick look on her face.

"It's either that or I run straight to Dumbledore and we all get obliviated again," Ron said calmly. "I'm just sorry I didn't think of this before."

"I'm sorry it had to turn out like this, mate," Harry said, realizing that things hadn't been as clear cut as he'd assumed.

"I'm sorry I won't remember being a true friend for once," Ron replied. "Hermione, do it. Please."

"Goodbye, Ron." A tear trickled down Hermione's cheek. "Obliviate."

"Let's go," Harry said roughly.

AN: Just wanted to write a reluctant Betrayer Ron. A lot of the fics use jealousy or money as a reason, this Ron is trying to take care of his family.

Omake: Draco's Speech

Draco looked over the assembled members of the Wizengamot as he stepped up to the podium to begin his speech. Despite his youth, the death of his father had thrust the young pureblood into politics and he was here to witness the vote that would confirm his ownership of the Malfoy seat on the governing body for British magical society. He was equally determined to show the world that the Malfoy line breed true and that he was very much his father's son.

"Fellow Purebloods," he began. A calculated insult directed at Potter and his filth. Draco refused to let the rabble disrupt his day and wanted them to know just what he thought of them being allowed to witness a meeting of their betters. "I come before you to . . . oh . . ." He felt a pair of hands remove his mighty wizard staff from his humble robes before the mouth under the podium began working in earnest. He took several calming breaths before resuming his speech, obviously his peers in the Wizengamot had chosen to welcome him in a manner befitting a man of his stature.

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Harry watched Draco's speech with a large grin of anticipation on his face. Nothing the blond ponce said seemed to effect it.

"Why did you drag me here anyway?" Ron moaned. "I could be sleeping."

"Wait for it," Harry murmured back.

"Be quiet Ron," Hermione whispered. "This is very educational."

"And a wonderful way to spend a birthday," Luna agreed. Harry had promised her the best present ever and she couldn't wait to see what it was. The only hint he'd given her was that it was something that everyone would enjoy and that if all went well, she'd finally be able to get rid of those pesky investigators from the Ministry that had been sniffing around the Quibbler looking for an excuse to shut it down.

"Wait for it," Harry murmured as Draco's speech ended and a relaxed look appeared on the ponce's face.

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'That had to have been the best speech ever,' Draco thought to himself. In more ways than one. Not only had he made it clear to the world that the Malfoy would remain at the top of the pack, but he'd finally gotten to expense one of the perks of his new position. He stepped back and glanced down to see the face of his first conquest and found himself staring into a very familiar set of eyes.

"Mu . . . mum," he stammered.

The woman absently wiped the corner of her mouth. "You want a repeat, it's ten galleons just like it is for everyone else."

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Everyone in the chamber stared in shock as Draco squealed like a ten year old girl before darting down the isle towards the nearest exit with little Draco flapping around for all to see.

Hermione covered her eyes. "I could have gone without seeing that," she said sickly.

"That had better not be my present," Luna said with a frown. "For one thing, it's too small for everyone to enjoy. For another, it's Draco's and that would be just icky."

"I'll explain later about the joys of combining polyjuice and diseased hookers," Harry said softly. "For now, just watch." The boy rose to his feet and cleared his throat loudly. "I think it's clear to all that the scion of the Malfoy line is unfit to take his position."

"Who are you to address the Wizengamot?" One of the members demanded.

"A member," Harry said simply.

"Since when?" Another member demanded. "I don't recall voting you in."

"Since two days after the deaths of my parents," Harry replied calmly.

Dumbledore frowned in concentration as he tried to dredge up the memory he was looking for. "Harry, that was supposed to be an honorary position."

"Shame it wasn't written up as such then, wasn't it?" Harry said cheerfully. "As I was saying, it's quite clear that young Mister Malfoy is unfit to become a member of such an honored body."

"What do you suggest?" An old man demanded. "That we give a seat to your pet mudblood?"

Harry clamped a firm hand on Hermione's shoulder and pushed her back into her seat. "What I'm suggesting is that we follow custom and appoint the closest blood relative to Malfoy main line to the position."

"Agreed," the member said with a satisfied smile.

"All opposed?" Dumbledore asked miserably. What did the boy think he was doing? "Then the motion passes." A sudden terrible thought occurred to him. "Harry?"

"Yes?" Harry asked with a wide smile.

"Just who exactly is the closest blood relative that we just gave the Malfoy seat to?" His ulcer began acting up as a possible answer supplied itself, anyone but her.

"Luna," Harry said loudly. "That's your cue."

AN: Yes, I stole the basic idea from 'Police Academy.'

Mini Omake: Mirror

Eyes that he saw every morning while he inspected his hair to make sure the houseelves got it right.

"Gotta love time turners," the other Draco said with a grin as he held up the aforementioned device.

Omake: Minerva, as she should have been.

Albus sighed in frustration when the Head of Slytherin house stormed into his office screaming something about Potters and Minerva.

Honestly, he was sometimes tempted to don a black robe and go on a killing spree just to get some peace and quiet.

"Settle down, Severus," Dumbledore ordered firmly. "I've summoned Minerva and the three of us can have a nice civil conversation after she gets here."

"Fine," Snape growled. He flopped into a chair with a look of frustration on his face. "But I won't be satisfied unless Potter is expelled."

"Of course you won't be," Dumbledore said in resignation. "And that's the wards, Minerva should be walking through the door . . . right . . . about . . ."

"You sent for me, Headmaster?" The Head of Gryffindor house asked politely.

"Severus tells me that you've overruled the detention he assigned to Harry Potter?"

"Young Mr. Potter was already serving a detention that night," Minerva said cautiously.

"Then why didn't you schedule it for a different night you simpl . . ."

Snape froze, the look on his colleague's face was nothing short of terrifying.

"Go on, Severus," Minerva said in a frighteningly polite tone. "What was it you were going to say?"

"I believe he was going to say something along the lines of 'you simply must see that option is available to us,'" Dumbledore interrupted.

"Is that true, Severus?" Minerva demanded.

"Of course," Snape said quickly.

"Because for a moment, I thought you were going to say something else," Minerva continued.

"Why don't we get back to the subject at hand," Dumbledore suggested. "Why didn't you move Harry's detention to another night, Minerva?"

"He's earned detention for the remainder of the year," Minerva replied. "And aside from that, I finally found the time to look into why Severus tends to discipline my students more than he does any of the rest of the houses."

"One must expect the students to be more boisterous in a class with their rival house," Dumbledore said quickly. "Especially when taught by their rival's head of house."

"So you say, Headmaster," Minerva said politely. "Which is why I saw fit to take fifty points from young Mr. Malfoy when he came into my class today, another fifty when he breathed too loudly during my lecture, and an even hundred for cluttering my hall on the way here. I believe that puts Slytherin behind, shame."

"Minerva, you . . ." Dumbledore began.

"Are following Severus' example," Minerva interrupted. "I even used the record of points gained and lost to cull some of Severus' reasons to use myself. I'm afraid I've never seen fit to take so many points off a student without cause before."

"Minerva we." Dumbledore glanced at his other Professor for support. "Never mind."

"I think we're done here, Albus. Don't you?"

"Yes, Minerva," Albus agreed. "We're done here."

Omake for 'Just a Pawn'

Odd Ideas #103

"Now, Headmaster, if you believe your plan is so vital, then you'll drink this Polyjuice potion and take Hermione's place at Draco's revel. I'll even obliviate you afterwards if you like. but if you'd rather not, I do have an alternative option..."

By dogbertcarroll

Considering the way Dumbles has been portrayed at times...

"Brilliant!" Dumbledore said, shocking them both.

"What?" the two stunned teens responded, shocked.

"I'll be able to avoid the guilt of being involved in the situation by taking her place myself. I don't know why I didn't think of it before. If time runs a bit long I can just have them slip me some more polyjuice claiming that it's a magical mickey to keep me compliant."

"You're really willing to do this?" Harry asked.

"But of course," Dumbledore assured them. "I would never ask anyone to do anything I wouldn't do myself. I'll need both of you to stay up here so they won't know about the switch and I won't need to be obliviated so I may get some additional details on the new DEs."

Dumbledore slammed back the polyjuice and headed out with a smile on his face and a song in his heart, thinking that he hadn't been in this sort of situation in over thirty years and he'd had to pay for it last time.

Hermione and Harry exchanged glances.

"That is the most dedicated light wizard ever," Harry swore.

"I'll never doubt him again," Hermione agreed.

Addition by slickrcbd

Just then, the defenses in Dumbledore's office activated and both were promptly rendered unconscious. Later that night, Hermione was

dismayed to discover that she had somehow accidentally broken her hymen when she tripped on the trick step and fell down the earlier. She was quite upset, she was hoping to give Harry the privilege of breaking it.

Revised Omake by slickrcbd

It was only after his Queen and Pawn had left that Dumbledore noticed that he wasn't in his normal body, but looked like a copy of Hermione Granger. How they managed to accomplish this without his noticing he had no idea and extremely disconcerting, as the taste of polyjuice is quite distinctive. He'd have to interrogate them under veritiserum to find out how they did it before removing all memory of it. Such knowledge is too dangerous, and they just proved that they aren't ready to possess it by what they did to his spies.

It was then that he realized that he still didn't have his wand. Rushing out of the office to catch them and force them to return it, he saw no sign of either Harry or Hermione. Could they have found a secret passage that he didn't know about? Something else to ask them about during the interrogation. While he was musing, he noticed that a group of Slytherins had surrounded him while he was lost in thought.

The leader then spoke, "Well, what have we here? The mudblood that was promised to us. You're not going to pull a switch THIS time. We're going to have SO much fun together..."



## Goblin Mercenary

Harry was in his aunt's garden making sure that she'd win the Surrey's best garden competition for a third year in a row when the bush next to him started to speak.

"Got a minute, Harry?" The bush asked.

"Depends on who's asking," Harry retorted.

The hood of an invisibility cloak was pulled back a bit to reveal the smiling face of Bill Weasley.

"What can I do for you, Bill?"

"First you've got to promise that you never tell anyone that you met with me or what we talked about," Bill said seriously. "My mum would kill me if she found out what I'm going to tell you."

"Sure thing," Harry agreed. "What's up?"

"You know what I do, right?"

"You're a Gringotts curse breaker," Harry replied.

"Do you know what a curse breaker does?"

"Raids old tombs for treasure," Harry said with a confused frown.  
"What's this about, Bill?"

"Yes and no," Bill sighed. "And what this is about is a job offer."

"What kind of job offer?"

"One that I'm going to try to talk you out of," Bill said honestly. "It's the only reason I agreed to give it."

"I'm listening."

"Let me put up some wards first to keep us from being disturbed," Bill stalled. He spent several minutes making the yard in front of number four as private as possible. "Okay, to start with . . . well, most curse breakers don't have anything to do with tombs. I'm a bit of an exception."

"What do most curse breakers do then?" Harry asked.

"To answer that question, I'm going to have to give you a little lesson on Goblin culture." Bill sat down on the lawn next to Harry. "There are a hundred goblin clans that I'm aware of. The largest and most powerful is the Gringotts clan that runs our banking system. These clans are rarely at peace with each other."

"So?"

"So most curse breakers are mercenaries, hired to fight in one of the many clan fights." Bill rubbed his hands together. "I don't have much to do with them personally. Had to deal with a couple raids by the other clans, but I mostly stay out of it."

"What's the job offer?"

"Gringotts heard about what happened in the Department of Mysteries and they're impressed," Bill said slowly. "They'd like to offer you a commission in one of their regiments."

"What's to be impressed about?" Harry asked bitterly. "I got Sirius killed."

"You also led a group of school children in a victory against several hardened killers," Bill pointed out.

"How much would this job pay?"

"Harry." Bill put his hand on the boy's shoulder. "Please don't do this, the job isn't worth any amount of pay."

"You didn't answer my question," Harry said calmly.

"No amount of money is worth your life," Bill persisted. "Harry, think about it for a moment."

"You still didn't answer my question," Harry persisted. 'This was it,' he thought to himself, 'a way of getting the experience he'd need to take on Voldemort and win.'

"That depends on the deal you work out with the higher ups," Bill said in defeat. "I don't have the authority to negotiate terms."

"Why don't you tell me what people normally make?" Harry suggested.

"Why don't you forget this foolishness?" Bill growled. "I'm not going to help you throw your life away."

"Then." Harry licked his lips. "Why don't you take me to someone who will?"

"Damn it." Bill took a marble out of his pocket. "Touch it."

The portkey activated and Harry found himself in an office with walls richly furnished with intricate tapestries and severed heads.

"Harry Potter?" A squat goblin with a missing eye growled.

"Yes," Harry agreed.

"Wait outside, Weasley," the goblin ordered.

"Yes, sir," Bill agreed.

"I've been authorized by Gringotts to induct you as a level five," the recruiting officer said formally.

"What's that mean?" Harry asked.

"Amount of pay," he replied. "Also a rank, has a long unpronounceable goblin name."

"I see." Harry frowned. "Could you elaborate?"

"Means that you can accept and get half pay for doing nothing more then agreeing not to attack Gringotts without giving two weeks notice," he said with a grin. "It's a measure of how dangerous Gringotts thinks you are. Also lets you take a position in one of the regiments for full pay if they'll have you."

"So I do nothing or join a regiment?" Harry asked.

"Or you go independent," the recruiter agreed. "Wouldn't recommend that till you have a lot more fame and wealth then you do now?"

"Why not?"

"As an independent, you're responsible for; the pay, care, and equipment of any soldiers you recruit. Without fame, you can't get good soldiers. Without wealth, you can't pay or equip them."

"I see." Harry paused. "Why are you offering me this position?"

"Because you led a group of school children against a superior force and managed to hold out until reinforcements arrived without suffering any casualties." The goblin grinned, showing a row of sharpened teeth. "We respect that."

"It was mostly luck," Harry murmured.

"We've also received a few reports on some of your other adventures," the goblin continued. "And we're willing to pay to see how long your luck holds out."

"I have some conditions," Harry said firmly.

"Name them," the goblin said with a lazy grin. "I'm sure that we can work something out."

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Harry emerged from the office two hours later with a smile on his face and a large sack of gold in his hands.

"Come on, Bill," Harry said. "We've got a bit of shopping to do."

"Where'd you get that money?" Bill asked.

"Signing bonus," Harry replied cheerfully.

"I've never heard of goblins giving a signing bonus before?"

"He was more than a bit impressed when I gave him the details of some of my adventures," Harry explained.

"Oh."

"By the way, you work for me now."

"What?"

"Even got you a promotion out of it," Harry continued.

"My contract states that I don't have to go into combat," Bill growled.

"You're working for me as an enchanter and curse breaker," Harry assured the older man. "Nothing too different from your last job."

"Alright then," Bill sighed. "I don't suppose you know what regiment you're with, do you?"

"I've decided to stay independent for a while," Harry replied.

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Harry stepped into the work room he'd assigned to his assistant and pasted a happy smile on his face.

"Hey, Bill," Harry called out. "You wanna help me stay alive?"

"Of course," Bill agreed. "What do I have to do?"

"I need you to make one of these that covers the goblin tunnels," Harry replied, pulling out his copy of the marauder's map and handing it to the Weasley.

"Where did you get this?" Bill demanded.

"From the twins," Harry replied. "My father and his friends made it."

"This is." He stared down at the map in awe. "Do you know how amazing this is?"

"Do you think you can make something similar that covers the tunnels?" Harry asked with a grin.

"No," Bill admitted. "Not without a significant amount of help."

"How much would that cost?" Harry cocked his head. "And would it help to have one of the map's creators working on it with you?"

"Yes it would," Bill agreed.

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Harry walked in and dumped the head of his last victim on the table. "I believe the bounty was half a million for the leader of the fang tooth regiment?" He announced with a grin.

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Bill stood up to address the Order.

"Professor Dumbledore, my oaths to Gringotts prevent me from giving any details but I strongly suggest that you contract with Gringotts to hire a security detail to watch over the school

"I'll take that suggestion under advisement," the Headmaster promised gravely.

"I also strongly recommend that you hire the first of the fifth 'head hunters' of Gringotts special project."

"Nonsense." Dumbledore's eyes twinkled. "The Order alone should prove sufficient."

"Headmaster," Bill said firmly. "I can't emphasize how strongly I recommend you to hire that particular unit."

"Sit down, Bill," Molly barked. "The Headmaster has spoken."

Bill's mouth closed with a snap and he collapsed into his chair. Now he knew what Harry had tried to explain to him, fools the lot of them.

AN: Someone posted the idea that Gringotts curse breakers were mercenaries that fought in internal goblin wars. This idea festered for a little while and this is the result. Not going to write anymore of this as too much of this is too similar to things I've written before for me to have much interest in continuing it. If I were to write this, I think I'd follow the MMORPG formula, who knows. Typos busted by Jim Trigg. Details provided by Tommy King.

Omake: Denial

"Hey, what are we gonna do today, Hermione?" Luna asked brightly.

"The same thing we do every night, Luna. Try to . . ."

"Seduce Harry?" Luna interrupted. She smiled eagerly. "No man can resist two women."

"That's rig . . . what? No" Hermione looked at her friend in shock. "What gave you the idea that we were going to try to seduce Harry?"

"It's the same thing we do every night, Hermione," Luna said patiently. "You know that."

"It is not, name one time we tried to seduce Harry," Hermione challenged.

"Yesterday," Luna said, holding up a finger. "When we paraded about in those skimpy outfits."

"We were at a swimming pool," Hermione protested.

"The day before when we had that wrestling match in front of him and started ripping each others clothes," Luna said, holding up a second finger.

"You took my book," Hermione said, just the memory of it made her frown.

"And you knew that I'd called dibs on reading it first so you clearly set up the entire situation," Luna said smugly. "Brilliant."

"Yes I . . . mean no, I didn't set it up to seduce Harry."

"How about the day before that?" Luna suggested.

"What about it?" Hermione asked wearily. She racked her mind in an attempt to divine what innocent situation Luna would twist into supporting her obviously insane idea.

"We were both sitting on Harry's lap," Luna said with a sly smile. "And I'm pretty sure that your hands did a bit of roaming."

"We were all sitting on a couch and reading," Hermione protested. "Oh, and my hands did not do a bit of roaming," she said firmly.

"Mine did," Luna said cheerfully. "Now let's see, the day before that . . ."

"We are not going to try to seduce Harry today," Hermione interrupted.

"All right," Luna agreed. "What are we going to do?"

Hermione sighed in relief after it became apparent that the blond was willing to drop her crazy, and completely unfounded, idea that they were trying to seduce Harry. "Well, I've noticed that the place is getting a bit dirty lately, so we're going to do a bit of cleaning up."

"We do that everyday?"



"We do things together every day," Hermione said firmly.

"Right," Luna agreed. "Let's get started."

"Not yet," Hermione said quickly. "We've got to change into our uniforms first." She left for a few minutes and returned with two black maid's uniforms.

"Those skirts look a little short," Luna muttered.

"It's traditional," Hermione replied.

"And that neckline looks a bit low," Luna said thoughtfully.

"Also traditional."

Luna clapped her hands in delight. "Let's start with Harry's room."

AN: They're Luna, they're Luna and Hermione.

Tiny Omake for Draco's Speech by moshehim 'Odd Ideas #104'

"What do you suggest?" An old man demanded. "That we give a seat to your pet mudblood?"

"I resent you calling me a Mudblood," Harry said, frowning. "Also, let it be put on record that in my opinion you are not fit for your position in the Wizengamot, either, if you believe giving a post-owl a seat on the ruling council of Wizarding Britain is a feasible idea, let alone a desirable

one."

Disclaimer: In the middle of a dozen fics, thought it might be nice to finish one of them.

Harry Potter: Hero for Hire

Harry winced as he settled down in his cupboard. He'd thought school would be different, that he'd be able to spend the whole day free from his relatives. He hadn't realized that Dudley would be in the same class or that the teacher would ignore a certain amount of 'roughhousing' since 'boys will be boys after all.'

"I wish I could go somewhere else," Harry murmured to himself as he drifted off to sleep. "Somewhere without the Dursleys."

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The courtier scowled down at the messenger after he'd read the dispatch the man had delivered. It was horrible, a catastrophe, and very likely to get him beheaded after he informed the King of the contents.

"I don't suppose I could persuade you to bring this back in a couple of hours after I get off shift?" The courtier asked.

The messenger looked offended at the very suggestion. "Be against the messenger's code it would."

"I am so sick of that code," the courtier growled.

"Then it's a good thing you ain't a messenger, eh?"

"Off with you."

"What, no tip?" the messenger shouted.

"Tell you what, if I'm still alive tomorrow then you can have a piece of gold."

"How about a copper today?" The messenger bargained. He'd been in the business long enough to have a good idea of what was going to happen to the other man.

The Courtier smiled. "How about nothing and we call it even?" He watched the boy leave in a huff, at least he was going out on a high note.

The courtier jotted down a revised version of his will as he waited for his turn to address the King, making sure to include a provision that anyone that gave the messenger a good kicking would be the recipient of ten gold coins.

"The king will see you now."

The courtier brushed past his fellow flunky and stopped a few feet before the throne to give a deep bow. "Sire, I'm afraid I have some bad news."

"What is it?" The king demanded.

"It's your daughter," the courtier said. "She's been kidnapped by the dragon."

"Of all the bloody foolish things to . . ." the king sighed. "Do we have anyone capable of defeating the dragon in single combat?" He sighed. She'd said she didn't want to get married to Prince what's his name the inbred, but he'd thought she'd at least be dutiful enough to go through with it. Never in his wildest dreams did he think she'd be stupid enough to go out and get herself kidnapped.

"No, sire."

"Fetch the royal wizard then," the King ordered.

"As you command, sire."

"And be sure he knows that I expect him to have a solution to my problem by the time he gets here," the king said ominously.

The wizard appeared in a flash of light a few minutes later. His robe was a deep blue, his eyes danced with power, and his magnificent white beard suggested untold years of study devoted to the arcane arts. He was the very model of a modern major spell caster.

"You have summoned me, sire?" The wizard addressed his liege in a deep booming voice.

"Drop the special effects and tell me how you're going to solve my problem," the king said sharply.

"Yes, my king," the mage seemed to droop. "I have a spell that will summon a mighty hero from a distant land to face the dragon and win back your daughter."

"Great, get to it."

"Now, sire?"

"Is there a problem with that?" The king asked in a tone that suggested 'there had better not be.'

"No, sire." Black lighting filled the room as the mage began his incantation. The walls seemed to melt and the air turned hazy with smoke.

"I said drop the effects," the king growled.

"My apologies, sire," the mage said contritely. "One gets used to doing things a certain way and . . ."

"Get on with it," the king interrupted.

The mage took a deep breath, snapped his fingers, and in a flash of light a figure appeared before the king.

"This is the hero?" The king said skeptically as he looked down at the sleeping child.

"According to the spell, he's already single handedly vanquished a powerful dark mage," the wizard assured his patron. "One that had been on the very brink of conquering a magical land."

"Still . . . kind of scrawny, don't you think?" The King said slowly.

"The spell parameters guarantee that he shall be able to defeat the dragon," the mage said quickly.

"Shame the spell couldn't be bothered to bring his equipment along," the King sighed. "Oh well, drop him off at the Armory and let him pick out what he wants."

"As my King commands."

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When Harry awoke, it became immediately apparent that he wasn't in his cupboard anymore. He was in a large room filled with racks upon racks of weapons and armor.

"Finally awake are you then?" An old man announced in a reedy old voice.

"Where am I?" Harry asked curiously.

"You're in the armory, lad. Here to pick your equipment for yer quest to defeat the dragon and rescue the princess."

"I . . ." Harry closed his mouth with a snap. It occurred to him that he'd been taken away from the Dursleys and it would be impolite, to say the very least, to complain about the chores his benefactors had assigned. "Okay, what should I get?"

The gleam in the old man's eye told Harry that he was in for a long day.

"Well." The old man licked his lips. "That depends."

"On what?"

“On if yer thinking that you'd like to hire yourself some retainers,” the old man replied. “And what yer thinkin of paying them, o'course.”

“Uh . . . okay, but I don't have any money and . . .”

“Y'ell, 'ave plenty after yer first quest.” Or he'd be dead. “So why don't we just leave aside that concern and address the first, yeh thinkin of hiring some retainers?”

“I guess,” Harry agreed. It seemed like the right thing to say anyway.

“Good, cause I got a few relatives that are in need of some work.” The old man gave Harry a satisfied smile. “Why don't I get someone to escort you down to the kitchen fer some grub, yer new retainers can take care of the rest.”

“Okay,” Harry agreed. He smiled as a maid took his hand and led him out of the room. “Thank you.”

“No, lad, thank you.” The old man grinned as he contemplated the bill they were going to submit to the king.

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The maid led Harry through a maze of halls and down a flight of stairs into a large kitchen. Without a word to any of the staff, she marched him across it and plopped him down on a comfortable chair next to the fire.

“Just wait here,” she said kindly. “I'll have something for you to eat right away.”

“Thank you,” Harry said politely.

He soon found his lap filled by a large plate heaped with roasted meat and his hand filled with a large mug of cider.

“When I get back I want to see that you've cleared that plate,” the maid said firmly. She was a mother many times over and didn't like the fact that she could count the young 'hero's' ribs by sight.

Harry looked at the maid incredulously. “It's all for me?”

“And more where that came from after you've finished,” she agreed indulgently.

Harry rewarded her with a dazzling smile. If this was how they were going to treat him, then he'd willingly face a hundred dragons for them.

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While Harry was enjoying the best meal he could remember having, his new retainers were organizing the expedition. While the heros that always got all the credit, none of their deeds would have been possible without an efficient support staff.

Harry's new Majordomo cast a critical eye over the group of misfits that had volunteered to join the young hero's household. Under normal circumstances, he'd have been disgusted with the slackness they all showed. But as the majority of them were related to him, he was willing to cut them a bit of slack.

“Alright,” he called out. “If yer goin with his nibs here to deal with the dragon, step forward.”

Half a dozen men stepped forward along with a young boy a bit smaller than Harry.

The Majordomo walked over to examine the young boy. “I don't recognize you.”

“I'm the new stableboy,” the kid said nervously.

“Hmmm . . . aren't you a bit young to go on an expedition to rescue a princess?”

"Why yes," the stableboy agreed. "Yes, I am."

"Alright then," the Majordomo said. He appreciated the honest answer. "Let's get the horses packed and see that everything is ready before we get the boss out of the kitchens."

"Already done, sir," one of the men said firmly.

"Who are you?" The old man asked.

"I'm the stableboy, sir."

"I thought he was the stableboy?" The Majordomo waved a withered hand at the kid.

"I'm the senior stableboy," the senior stableboy explained.

"Whatever." He picked out one of the maids. "You, go tell the boss that we're ready and bring him here."

"Yes, uncle," the maid agreed. She returned a few minutes later holding Harry by the hand and presented him to the patriarch of her family.

The Majordomo looked down at Harry. "We've got your team together, sir. Two stableboys, an arms caddy, a cook, and half a dozen porters. With your permission, the rest of us will be surveying your future estates."

"Estates?"

"If you want to call it that," the old man said with an embarrassed smile. "Afraid since it wasn't an arranged kidnapping . . . well, you know how these things are."

"Uh huh," Harry agreed. Actually, he didn't know how those things were but he thought it best to go with the flow. Living with the Dursleys had taught him not to make waves.

"Ever ridden a horse before?"



"No," Harry replied.

"Didn't think so, that's why I had them pick out a gentle one for you. Just hold on and let him teach you how to ride."

"Okay," Harry agreed. The old man boosted him into the saddle of a large grey horse and handed him the reigns.

"Remember, just relax and let him do all the work," the old man advised.

"Right," Harry agreed.

The dragon's cave was a hard week's ride from the castle. An expert horseman could have done it in less if he had remounts, Harry's group arrived a month after they'd left. Harry fell into a routine as they journeyed to the Dragon's lair, he'd ride the first half of the day and practice his sword work under the watchful eye of his arms caddy the other half of the day while the staff arranged his camp site. It was the happiest he'd ever been in his life; he had a friend in the form of the junior stableboy, he had all the food he could eat, and no one yelled at him. It was a shame things were all going to end when the dragon gobbled him up, Harry reflected to himself as he prepared to go to sleep. They'd advised him to scout out the cave in the morning and then go back in the afternoon for the grand battle, Harry didn't see any reason to ignore their advise.

Harry awoke with a start a few hours later.

"Wake up, sir Harry," the arms caddy said gently.

"What is it?" Harry mumbled.

"The stableboys have run off to face the dragon," the arms caddy replied. "Might be a good idea to go rescue them before they get eaten."

"Okay," Harry agreed. He crawled out of bed and began pulling on his clothes.

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People screamed as the massive shadow of the dragon eclipsed the sun and brought darkness to the land. They stopped screaming when it became apparent that the dragon was on its way to the castle, none of their affair what the nobs got up to.

The King stood on the rampart clad in gleaming armor, ready to lead the defense of his kingdom against the fearsome beast.

"False alarm, sire," the general called out. "Looks like the dragon isn't here for an attack after all."

"Ah, I didn't think we had that scheduled for another three months." The king nodded to himself. "Stand down and send a bottle of wine to my chambers."

"Yes, sire."

The king wasted no time getting out of his uncomfortable, but stylish, armor. Slipping into something more comfortable, he sat down in his favorite chair and pasted a regal look on his face just as there was a knock on the door.

"Enter," he called out in his most royal tone.

"Um, dragon here to see you, sire," a servant said nervously.

"Show him in," the King replied. The dragon stepped in and the king knew from the expression on the creature's face that it was going to be one of those meetings. "What is it?"

"Bloody mess is what it is," the dragon replied. He fixed a pair of reptilian eyes on the servant. "Leave unless you'd like a tour of my gastrointestinal tract."

"Eep."

The door slammed shut and the dragon smiled as his keen ears picked up the sound of someone retreating rapidly.

"What happened?" The king asked.

"I was defeated by a bloody stableboy is what happened," the dragon said unhappily. "One your daughter swore up and down was her true love who'd come to rescue her."

"Her true love?" The king asked weakly.

"What was I supposed to think?" The dragon asked quickly. "Princes have tumbles in the hay with commoners, princesses stay pure and true and all that rot."

"What a bloody mess," the king moaned.

"Try seeing things from my point of view," the dragon commiserated. "I was defeated by a damned stableboy, and that's not the worst thing."

"What's the worse thing?"

"Oh, you're really gonna hate this."

"Just tell me," the king demanded.

"Two stable boys accompanied your hero to my volcano."

"And?"

"And the other wasn't a boy," the dragon said unhappily. "It was your youngest daughter."

"I'd thought she was being more quiet then usual," the king reflected. "What did she do?"

"Either kidnapped or got kidnapped by my youngest daughter," the dragon replied. "Your hero arrived and rescued them from each other."

"And the rules are clear about what happens next," the king groaned.  
"Rescue a princess and she's yours to marry."

"Never should have taken the job of dragon king," the dragon growled.  
"Stupid job, doesn't even have any good perks."

"You think yours is bad, how would you like to try mine?"

"Mine is quite enough, thank you."

"So how are we going to deal with this?" The king asked.

"Well, for one thing." The dragon gave a reptilian grin. "I think it's plain to everyone that the stableboy was a disguised prince."

"Amazing the way he was able to keep it from everyone for so long," the king agreed quickly. "But the defeat of the dragon was enough to prove his lineage."

"Right," the dragon agreed. "As for our youngest daughters . . ."

"They made their bed," the king agreed.

"Let them lay in it."

"Remember the old days?" The King reminisced.

"Nothing like this happened in our day," the dragon agreed.

"Proper rescues and none of that kidnapping a dragon nonsense to muddy things up," the king said. "Those were the days."

"More wine?"

"Thank you," the king said gratefully. "You know, we really don't visit enough."

"We'll have to make it a point to get together more often," the dragon agreed.

"Talk about old times," the king sighed. "Remember the first time I went to your cave to rescue a princess?"

"Remember that voice of hers?" The dragon shuddered. "I almost killed you when you apologized and said you were on a quest to kill the troll and that the princess would have to wait for the next hero."

"Sorry about that," the king said, looking anything but. "But there was no way in hell I was going to take that one for a wife."

"Lucky thing a knight arrived three days later, I was ready to go mad."

"Luck hell," the king laughed. "Bastard was sniffing around my sister."

"Thank you then."

"What're friends for?"

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Harry returned to camp with his new princesses just in time for lunch that afternoon. He sighed, if he'd known this would happen, he'd have just stayed with the damned Dursleys. Both girls had been arguing since he'd met them and they were still at it.

"If you didn't want to hold me prisoner then you shouldn't have captured me," the small dragon said logically.

"You captured me," the former stableboy said stubbornly. "I'm a princess, you're a dragon. Dragons capture princesses."

"I'm a princess and I thought you were a fearsome knight."

"How would you mistake me for a knight?" The girl demanded.

"You came into my lair and demanded to know where the princess was," the small dragon said. "Definite knight behavior."

"I'm a girl," the princess protested.

“How was I supposed to know that?” The tiny dragon demanded. “My books all agree that human females all have large sacks on their chest, you don't.”

“I'm still growing,” the princess said defensively.

“Quiet,” one of the cooks barked. She fixed both of them with a glare. “The dragon has decreed that both of you captured the other. Not a common situation to be sure, but not unheard of either. The two of you need to learn to get along or you're both going to have a very unpleasant time of it.”

The years past and by the time his Hogwarts letter came around, Harry was the most accomplished and sought after hero in all the land.

“I really think it would be in your best interests to hear their offer,” Harry's legal advisor murmured into his ear.

Later . . .

“So let me get this straight,” Harry's legal advisor said with a feral smile. “You want my liege to attend your school.”

“Yes,” Dumbledore agreed.

“A school that you're using to guard a priceless magical artifact from the shade of an evil wizard.” She smiled, it hadn't been easy to ferret out that little piece of information.

“Gurk.”

“Let's talk payment then, shall we?” She purred.

Still later . . .

Hermione screamed as the door began to buckle.

"Excuse me," a petite girl called out. She frowned when Hermione ignored her. "Oh, for heavens sake." She slapped the other girl across the face. "Finished?"

"How did you . . . I know I was alone a few minutes ago?" Hermione stammered.

"My name is Princess Rosamond, and we really don't have time for a long explanation of how I got here. The important thing is that you answer two questions, are you ready?"

"Y . . . yes," Hermione agreed.

"First question, do you believe that the troll on the other side of this door poses a danger to life and limb?"

"Yes," Hermione agreed quickly.

"Do you wish to be rescued?"

"Yes," Hermione screamed as the troll burst through the door.

Suddenly there was a boy and an old man with a golf bag in the room between them and the troll.

"Sign here, please." The Princess handed Hermione a stack of paperwork. Hermione numbly complied.

"What do you think, George?" Harry absently dodged the troll's club as he waited for an answer.

"I'd say the number four long sword would be your best bet, sir," the old man replied.

"I was going to say a number five myself," Harry said to himself as he ducked another strike. "But let's go with the four, and see how that works out."

"As you say, sir." The old man reached into the golf bag and pulled out a gleaming long sword. "Here you are, sir."

Hermione watched in shock as the boy turned back to the troll and dispatched the creature with a dozen quick cuts.

"You were right as usual, George," Harry said as he handed the sword back to his weapon caddy. "Number five would have been a touch long in this confined space."

"I do my best, sir."

"Now then." Harry turned to the princess with a smile. "Get her to the others, and get her cleaned up."

"As my lord commands," the girl agreed with a grin.

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She smiled down at the girl. "I'm Harry's legal advisor."

"What does a questing hero need with a legal advisor?"

"You'd be surprised," the woman said with a grin. "If you're asking how he wound up with me . . . well, my father promised that I could finish my schooling before he arranged my marriage. I was just finishing law school and getting ready to start a new course to get my L.L.M. when he realized just how long school can take. My father being who he is, hired a group of orks to kidnap me rather than accepting the fact that that I had no intention of wedding my first cousin."

"And now you're engaged to Harry."

"Heavens no, my father may be a king but he's no legal genius. I found a loophole within five minutes of looking at the agreement he'd signed with Harry."

"Um . . ."



“Harry set me up with one of his retainers and we're planning to get married this fall, it's what he does with most of the princesses he rescues.”

“Oh.”

AN: Just having a bit of fun with this. I'd first thought to insert Harry into any number of situations by having him and others make off handed references to that time he fought the kodan armada or that time he had to fire a missile through a two meter exhaust port, etc. Decided I liked keeping things sword and sorcery. Typos destroyed by SP, elmayerle, random832

isclaimer: Too lazy to think up a better title.

## Big Sister Tonks

It was only a few minutes till his first class of the day and Harry was completely lost. Not an unusual event, it was only the second day of classes after all and he had woken up early to do a bit of exploring.

"Need some help?" A perky voice asked.

Harry turned to find a voluptuous pink haired girl with a prefect badge on her substantial bosom.

"I'm trying to find the charms classroom," Harry replied.

"Come on," the prefect said with a grin, "I'll take you there."

Harry followed the girl through a maze of empty corridors before she deposited him in front of his classroom.

"Here we are," the prefect announced. "And with plenty of time before your class starts."

"Thank you," Harry said gratefully.

"No thanks necessary," the pink haired prefect said cheerfully. She turned and began walking down the hall. "We are family after all."

"Wait," Harry called out desperately. "What do you mean, family?"

Tonks' heart melted at the look of hope on the boy's face. "Your grand mum and my grand dad were brother and sister, makes us cousins."

"I didn't know I had cousins aside from the . . ." his mouth closed with a snap. "Do I have any other family at Hogwarts?"

"Probably loads," Tonks agreed. "Don't know that you have any closer related then I am . . . well, you've got one that's as close as I am. His mum's my aunty."

"Who is it?" Harry asked eagerly.

"Draco Malfoy," Tonks said flatly. "Myself, I pretend we're not related."

"Yeah," Harry agreed with a look of disgust on his face.

"But the two of us can still be," Tonks added quickly. "Well, if you want."

"Thanks cousin . . . uh . . ."

"Just call me Tonks," the girl advised. "I'll tell you my embarrassing first name later."

"Okay, Cousin Tonks," Harry said with a bright smile. And so the world changed.

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Several eyes turned to watch as the entrance to the Hufflepuff dorms opened to admit two first year students.

"There's one," Hannah said.

"Right," Susan agreed. The two firstys marched over the the prefect.

"What is it?" The older girl asked.

"Harry Potter's been standing outside the entrance of the Common Room for a while," Susan announced.

"What's he want?"

"We didn't . . ."

"We were too shy to ask," Hannah supplied.

"Alright then," the girl sighed. She walked to the entrance and soon found the boy. "Something I can do for you?" The sixth year Hufflepuff girl's Prefect asked neutrally.

"Is my cousin in there?" Harry asked nervously. "I was hoping that I could talk with her about some things . . . if she's not busy."

"Oh," the Prefect gave the boy a warm smile. "I didn't realize that you had a cousin in Hufflepuff. Who is it?"

"Tonks," Harry replied, "she's a Prefect."

"Yes, I know." She led the young boy into the common room and sat him down on one of the chairs. "Wait here, I think she's in her dorm right now."

"Okay," Harry agreed.

The Prefect darted up the stairs to find her pink haired senior.

"You never told me that Harry Potter was your cousin," she accused playfully.

"You never asked," Tonks replied. "Besides, boy's probably related to half the school."

"Not closely," she said with a mock pout. "Well, your cousin is waiting downstairs for you. Looks important."

"Why didn't you say so before," Tonks growled as she stalked out of the room.

"Cause you didn't ask," the girl replied smugly.

Tonks muttered a few unrepeatable phrases under her breath as she crossed the Common Room to Harry's chair.

"Harry," Tonks squealed. "You came to visit me."

"I didn't know who else to talk to," Harry said with a blush. "I was hoping . . ."

"You come to me for anything," Tonks ordered. "Now then, what seems to be the trouble?"

"It's Professor Snape," Harry said hesitantly.

"What about him?"

"Is he always like that?" Harry asked slowly.

Tonks squatted bring herself to the boy's eye level. "Like what, what did he do?"

"Well . . . he asked me a bunch of questions about ingredients the first class and called me a celebrity, then he took points off when I didn't know the answers."

"All the while acting like a big snotty bat?"

Harry laughed. "Yeah."

"Well, he usually isn't quite that bad, but he's always like that. Worse to Gryffindors than anyone else."

Harry seemed to think it over for a minute. "So what should I do?"

"What do you want to do?" Tonks countered. "I can file a complaint if you want."

"Will that do any good?"

"Never has before," Tonks replied. "I suppose we could go to the Prophet if things get real bad."

"What's the Prophet?"

"Newspaper, we could crucify him in the court of public opinion. Might want to hold off on that one," she advised.

“Yeah,” Harry agreed.

“Whatever you end up doing, be sure not to slack off on your potions studies.” Tonks giggled. “Can you imagine the look that would be on the greasy bat's face after you get an 'O' on your NEWTs potion?”

Harry laughed. “He'd hate it.”

“Despise it,” Tonks agreed.

“Thanks, Cousin Tonks.” Harry sighed. “It was nice to have someone to talk to.”

“You be sure to come to me if the slimy bat gets worse, okay.”

“Okay,” Harry agreed.

“And be sure to visit for other reasons too, okay?”

“Okay,” Harry agreed.

“Now then, do you have anything you need to go to?”

Harry shook his head.

“Then we're going to do something fun together,” Tonks continued. “Let's go.”

“Like what?” Harry asked.

“You know how to sneak into the kitchens?” Tonks replied with a grin.

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After the troll announcement, Harry and Ron sensibly started to follow the rest of their classmates back to Gryffindor tower.

A thought occurred just before they left the Great Hall causing Harry's eyes to widene in horror. “Ron.” He turned to his friend.

"What?"

"Hermione doesn't know about the troll," Harry said quickly. "We have to go save her."

"Yeah," Ron agreed. The boy looked a little sick at the prospect of facing a full grown mountain troll.

"Come on," Harry hissed. He rushed over to the other side of the Great Hall. "Cousin Tonks," he yelled.

Tonks turned and grinned down at Harry. "Supposed to go to your own dorms, but I guess we can make an exception."

"Hermione doesn't know about the troll," Harry reported breathlessly. "We have to save her."

"Damn it." Tonks' hair cycled through several colors. "You know where she is?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed.

"Gonna go track down one of the Gryffindors," Tonks yelled to her fellow Prefects. "If I'm not back soon, come get me." Upon seeing their thumbs up, she turned back to the two boys. "Where is she?" Tonks demanded.

"Crying in one the girl's toilets," Harry replied quickly.

"Which one," Tonks barked. "Hurry, Harry."

"I don't know how to describe it," Harry said helplessly. "Ron?"

"Sorry, mate."

"But you know how to get there, right?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed.

“You.” Tonks pointed at Ron. “Join the Hufflepuffs.”

“But . . .”

“Now,” Tonks said sharply. “Or so help me I’ll make you wish you met that damned troll instead of me.”

Ron muttered something inaudible before walking away.

“Come on, Harry,” Tonks said urgently, “sooner we find her, sooner we can get somewhere safe.”

“Right,” Harry agreed.

“You don’t happen to know any hexes that will work on a troll, do you?” Tonks said suddenly.

“No,” Harry said miserably.

“We’ll fix that later,” Tonks assured the boy. “For now . . .” she pursed her lips. “The incantation is ‘Oleum’ and . . . do you know what a reverse flick is?”

“Yes,” Harry replied.

“Well it’s that followed by pointing at whatever you want to hit,” Tonks lectured. “It’s a lubrication charm and it’s normally used for . . .” she blushed. “Well, that’s not important. Important thing is the fact that it’s really easy to cast.”

“Okay.” Harry tried the spell and was rewarded by a spray of oil hitting the wall.

“Good,” Tonks assured the boy. “If we see the troll, I want you to cast that charm on the ground and run away . . . uh, be sure to cast it behind you.”

“What’ll that do?”



"Hopefully make the bugger slip and give you time to get away," Tonks explained.

"What about you?"

"I do know several hexes that might work against a troll," Tonks replied confidently. Key word, might. She was really hoping that she'd never have to find out.

"I think this is the place," Harry announced.

"Come on then."

"Go into the girl's toilet?" Harry asked nervously.

"I'm not leaving you out here alone," Tonks replied simply. "Okay?"

"Okay," Harry agreed.

The soft sound of a young girl crying immediately informed them that they were in the right place.

"Are you in here, Hermione?" Harry asked.

"Go away," Hermione sobbed.

"We have to get out of here," Harry said quickly. "There's a troll in the castle."

The sound of quiet cursing drew both children's attention to the older girl as she closed the door and hit it with a number of locking charms.

"What is it?" Harry asked.

"Quiet," Tonks whispered. "Troll in the hall." She glanced down at her charges. "Stay behind me and hope it doesn't hear us."

The door shook from a violent blow and the stench of troll began to permeate the room.

"Looks like we didn't hope hard enough," Tonks said in resignation. The door shook from another blow. "And it looks like my spells aren't going to hold up much longer." The future Auror braced herself for what she knew was coming.

Another blow was enough to splinter the door and overcome the charms, the only thing that had stood between them and the Troll was gone.

"I'll try to get him away from the door," Tonks said with as much calm as she could muster. "I want the two of you to make a break for it, understand?"

"Yes," Harry agreed. "We understand."

"Ready?" Tonks flung a sick yellow curse at the Troll's eyes. "Go, run." The room lit up with flashes of spell fire as she threw every curse she knew at the massive beast.

"Come on." Harry grabbed Hermione by the wrist and ran towards the door.

A muffled "Damn it." Caused Harry to look over his shoulder, and his heart stopped when he saw his cousin laying on the ground.

"GO," Harry screamed at Hermione as he pushed the girl through the door. "RUN." Harry turned and flung himself at the Troll.

Hermione's legs burned from exertion as she ran down the hall way and into her head of house.

"Why aren't you in your dormitories?" Minerva demanded.

"Troll in the castle," Hermione wheezed. "Harry's still there."

"Stay here," Minerva ordered. She sprinted down the hall way in the direction that Hermione had come from.

Her heart almost stopped when she saw the ruined door and the Transfiguration Mistress cautiously approached.

“And another thing,” she heard a girl's voice shout. “When I tell you to bloody run, I expect you to bloody run.”

Minerva stepped into the doorway to the scene of one of the Hufflepuff prefects scolding 'the-boy-who-lived' next to the rapidly cooling corpse of a large troll.

“What's going on here?” Minerva

“Professor McGonagall,” Tonks said respectfully.

“Why are you not in your Dormitories?” Minerva asked sharply.

“Came out to retrieve one of your firsty girls,” Tonks explained. “Wasn't at the meal, so she didn't know about the Troll.”

“And why is Mr. Potter with you?” Minerva asked calmly.

“He's the one that told me about her,” Tonks replied. “Didn't know the castle well enough to give me directions so I brought him along.”

“I see.”

“Is Hermione alright?” Harry asked softly.

“She did not appear to be injured when I last saw her,” Minerva agreed.

“Is there anything else you'd like to know, Professor?” Tonks asked.

“Not at this time,” Minerva said.

“Then if you'll excuse us, Professor McGonagall. My cousin and I have to get back to our discussion about how he ignored my order to run in favor of attacking a full grown troll,” Tonks said sweetly. “Don't we, Harry?”

"You were on the ground," Harry mumbled stubbornly. He stared down at his shoes. "You're the only family I have left, I couldn't let it hurt you."

Minerva let out her breath. "Don't be too hard on him then," she requested. It didn't appear as if any rules had been broken. Indeed, both students had shown remarkable judgement aside from Mr. Potter's apparent attempt on the troll in defense of his cousin's life. As for that, it appeared that both students wished to treat it as a family matter. "Gryffindors are supposed to be brave, after all."

"Yes, Professor and Hufflepuffs are loyal." Tonks tried to muss up her cousin's hair. "He was certainly both, pity he wasn't Ravenclaw smart too." She favored him with a proud smile that Harry returned. "Wipe that grin off your face," Tonks said cheerfully. "I'm not done being mad at you."

"Wait here," Minerva ordered. "I'm going to go collect Ms. Granger, I'll be back shortly."

"Yes, Professor," Tonks agreed.

When Minerva returned with the missing girl a few minutes later, she was amused to find that the Hufflepuff Prefect had finished scolding her cousin and was currently engaged in cleaning him.

"Hold still," Tonks ordered. She wiped another bit of invisible dirt off his chin with her handkerchief.

Hermione stepped out from behind her Head of House and gave an awkward curtsy. "Thank you for rescuing me, Prefect," she said formally.

"Thank Harry," the Prefect said with a grin. "He's the one that told me about you, and he's the one that brought me here."

"I couldn't let the troll get you," Harry said with a blush.

"Thank you, Harry." Hermione gave the boy a curious look.

"Let's get you two back with the other Gryffindors," Minerva said calmly. A sudden thought took her. "Unless I have another stray lamb wandering about."

"Got another one of yours in the Hufflepuff dorms, Professor," Tonks said absently.

"Ron was with me when we got Tonks," Harry explained. "She told him to go with the Hufflepuffs and had me go with her."

"Didn't want to bring either one of them," Tonks commented. "Figured one was easier to keep an eye on than two."

"Good thinking, Ms. Tonks. Now then, let's collect Mr. Weasley and get you all back to your rooms."

As the two children trailed behind the Professor and the Prefect on the way to the Hufflepuff dorms, Hermione decided to ask the question that had been bothering her since she'd found out that Harry had led the Prefect to her.

"Harry, can I ask you a question?" Hermione whispered.

"What is it?" Harry whispered back.

"Why did you come save me?" Hermione asked.

"Why wouldn't I?"

"I . . . I thought you hated me." The girl's face twisted up. "Because I'm such a know it all and . . . and . . ."

"I don't hate you," Harry said firmly.

"Oh." Hermione mulled it over for a few minutes. "Still, I never expected you to risk yourself like that for me. Thank you Harry, and I'm sorry I didn't believe you were with Prefect Tonks because you wanted to rescue me."

Harry shot her an incredulous look. "Why else would I have been out of the Common Room when there was a troll running about?"

"When I saw you with Prefect Tonks, I thought she'd caught you sneaking around the halls," Hermione admitted.

"I . . . I guess that's fair," Harry admitted. He held out his hand. "Friends?"

"What?" Hermione stared down at his hand in shock.

"Would you like to be friends?" He almost panicked when he noticed the girl had tears in her eyes.

"I would like that very much," Hermione agreed, taking his hand.

Tonks cleared her throat loudly before turning to face the two children. She and the Professor had stayed out of it, content to let the children work through things without outside interference.

"Wait here," Tonks advised the group. "I'll be back with your lost lamb in two shakes."

"Alright," Minerva agreed. She looked down at her students. "Exactly why weren't you in the Great Hall, Ms. Granger?"

"Um . . ." Hermione glanced at Harry. "I . . ."

"We said some horrible things to her, Professor," Harry interjected. "It was all my fault."

"Harry didn't . . ." She closed her mouth with a snap. "I mean . . ."

Minerva sighed. "Just know that my office door is always open and I'm happy to discuss your problems," she announced. "Both of you."

"Yes, Professor."

Tonks arrived a few minutes later with a nervous looking Ron Weasley in tow.

“And that's all three, don't know of any other strays.”

“Thank you, Ms. Tonks.” Minerva looked down at her student. “I trust that Hufflepuff House treated you well?”

Ron jumped as if he'd been stung and quickly turned to face Hermione. “Sorry I said such nasty things about you,” Ron said without being prompted. “I was a right git and what I did was a dis . . . uh . . . it made the house look bad because I'm in it.”

“Apology accepted,” Hermione said with a sniff. She took a step away from the boy, the fact that this took her closer to Tonks was just a coincidence. She looked up at the older girl with wide worshipping eyes. “Do you think you could teach me those curses you used on the troll?” She asked hopefully.

“Sure thing,” Tonks agreed. “Was planning to teach Harry anyway, one more won't be too difficult.”

“Let's get you three back to Gryffindor,” Minerva said. “Care to accompany me, Prefect Tonks?”

“Be delighted to, Professor.”

“Hey, Harry,” Ron whispered.

“What is it, Ron?”

“Don't mess with the puffs,” Ron advised, “bloody scary.”

“Huh?”

“They got real angry after I told them why Hermione wasn't in the Great Hall,” Ron explained. The boy shuddered. “Told me if I didn't apologize.” He shuddered. “Just, just don't mess with the Puffs, okay?”

After a few minutes of walking and light conversation, Tonks and Minerva saw the children safely back in Gryffindor tower.

"Please wait a moment, Ms. Tonks," Minerva requested firmly. "I'd like to let a couple of my Prefects know that I expect them in my office for a discussion on why they didn't notice that three of mine were missing."

"Of course, Professor," Tonks agreed happily. Minerva disappeared and returned a few minutes later.

"Walk with me, Prefect," Minerva said as they turned away from the entrance to the Gryffindor Common Room.

"Yes, Professor," Tonks agreed.

"What punishment did you decide upon for young Mr. Potter?" Minerva asked the Prefect.

"Two months of detention with me. I gave him week and he asked for more time," Tonks grinned at the Professor. "Gonna be a heartbreaker when he gets older."

"Planning to give him a bit of extra instruction?" Minerva asked carefully.

"Every Black comes to Hogwarts knowing a number of nasty curses," Tonks agreed. "Mum made sure I wasn't an exception and I'm going to do the same for Harry."

"Come to me after you've taught him the ones you know," Minerva ordered.

"Professor?"

"I'd wager that I've picked up a few tricks that might be useful for a future Auror," Minerva said with a smile. "Would have made subduing the troll easier anyway."

"Yes, Professor," Tonks agreed happily.

IIIIIIII



All was as it should be in the Hufflepuff Common Room the next night. The students were studying, the fire was roaring, and our favorite Hufflepuff Prefect had just settled down after making her rounds.

"Your boyfriend's waiting for you outside you despicable cradle robber," a Hufflepuff seventh year called out to Tonks as he walked into the Common Room.

"Get 'em young and train 'em up right," one of the other girls said approvingly. "That's what mum always said."

"He's family," Tonks replied with a grin. "And since I'm not a pureblood, that means he's off limits."

"Your dastardly deed foiled before it even had a chance," another Puff sighed. "This is why nobody takes us seriously, all our dastardly plans have glaring flaws like that."

"Just means we have to work harder at it," Tonks replied. "And if there's one thing we're not afraid of in this house it's . . ."

"Badgers."

"Pigeons."

"Very small rocks."

"Right," Tonks agreed as she stepped out of the room. She found her cousin standing outside with the girl they'd rescued from the troll.

"Good afternoon, Cousin Tonks," Harry said formally.

"Hey, Harry and . . . Hermione, right?"

"Yes, Prefect Tonks," Hermione agreed. "Um . . ."

"Hermione has something she would like to ask you." Harry nudged the girl gently.

"What can I do for you?"

"Can I have detention with you too?" Hermione asked hopefully, her eyes shining with hero worship.

"Huh?" Nothing in her years as a prefect had prepared her for this. "You want detention?" She asked cautiously.

"If it's with you," Hermione agreed.

Tonks sighed, "fine. You can have detention with me. Anything else?"

"Can we start early?" Harry asked with a shy smile.

"I guess there's nothing I needed to do for the next hour," Tonks said after a moment of thought. "But it takes the fun out of things if you two like detention."

"Sorry," Harry said looking anything but.

Tonks spent the next couple hours running the children through drill after drill until both of them were about to collapse in exhaustion.

"Still want to have detention?" Tonks asked Hermione with a smirk as she escorted the two first years back to their dorms.

"Yes, Prefect Tonks," Hermione agreed with a sleepy yawn.

"Then I suppose you two won't mind if I make tomorrow twice as hard," Tonks mused.

"You're doing it for our benefit, why would we mind?" Harry said with Hermione echoing her agreement a few moments later.

The tone of perfect honesty in their voices caused Tonks to sigh in exasperation. It wasn't any fun if your victims asked you to tighten the thumbscrews. After depositing her charges safely back in Gryffindor tower, Tonks made a stop in the hospital wing on her way back to the Hufflepuff Dorms.

"Is something wrong, child?" Madame Pomfrey asked when she came in.

"Not with me," Tonks said. "Um, I was wondering if you've had a chance to do a check up on my cousin?"

"I wasn't aware that you had any family attending," Poppy said with a raised eyebrow.

"Probably half a dozen with how close most pureblood families are," Tonks said with a grin. "But I was talking about Harry Potter."

"I see," Poppy said neutrally.

"Because if you haven't checked him, I was hoping that you would," Tonks continued. "Seeing how he's a bit scrawny for his age." Tonks paused to think for a moment. "Oh, I'm giving him and Hermione granger some extra lessons and could you please make sure that there isn't anything I should watch out for?"

"When are you giving them these lessons?" Poppy asked.

"After classes," Tonks replied. "As detention, Professor McGonagall knows."

"Bring them around tomorrow before you start and I'll have a look at them," Poppy said.

"Thank you, Madame Pomfrey."

"Just doing my job, Ms. Tonks."

Wanting nothing more than to collapse into bed after a hard day's work, Tonks left the hospital wing. She got back to her dorm to find a pair of eager first years waiting by the entrance. "What can I do for you two?" She asked.

"Um," the blond turned and gave her friend a look.

"Could you introduce us to Harry Potter?" The red head asked hopefully.

"Fine," Tonks sighed. "Might be a good idea to introduce yourselves to me first."

"I'm Susan Bones," the redhead introduced herself. "And this is my friend, Hannah Abbot."

"Did . . ." Hannah stammered. "Did you really tear a mountain troll apart with your bare hands?"

Both girls looked up at the prefect with starry eyes as they waited for her response.

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Hannah and Susan were waiting with Tonks when the two Gryffindors arrived for their detention the next night.

"Harry, Hermione, I'd like you to meet a couple of my first years," Tonks introduced the children. "The one on the left is Hannah and the one on the right is Susan."

"Pleased to meet you," Susan said. She looked over at her friend after a few moments. "Hannah's shy," she explained, giving the girl a nudge.

"Pleased to meet you," Hannah said with a deep red blush.

"The pleasure is all mine," Harry said, mimicking a character in one of the movies he'd seen through a crack in the door of his cupboard.

"Hello," Hermione said shyly.

"Would you like to be friends?" Susan asked hopefully.

"We'd like that very much," Hermione said happily. "Right, Harry?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed.

"Come on, you two," Tonks said, taking her charges by the hand. "We've got to get going if we're going to start your detention on time."

"Bye Susan, bye Hannah," Harry waved with his free hand.

"Can they have detention with us too?" Hermione asked hopefully. The magic world was even better than she'd hoped it would be. Here she was, not even half way through the first semester and she already had three friends. Granted, she'd had a bit of a rough start but things were looking up.

"They haven't asked," Tonks said simply. She looked down at the two confused Hufflepuff first years. "I'll explain later." She turned and began walking down the hall way.

Hermione was the first one to notice something was up. "This isn't the way we went last night, is it, Tonks?"

"Nope, we're making a little detour before we start our lessons," Tonks said. "I arranged for Madame Pomfrey to have a look at you two."

"Why'd you do that?" Hermione questioned.

"Always a good idea to consult a healer before you start doing something strenuous," Tonks advised.

"Oh." Hermione nodded in understanding. "I see."

The physical was fairly straightforward thought Madame Pomfrey did have one complaint when it came to Harry's health.

"Mr. Potter's diet hasn't been the best and that could have caused a few problems in the future. As it is, there's nothing a few potions can't fix." Madame Pomfrey walked to her cabinet and began removing bottles. "Be sure he drinks one of these every night."

"What do you mean by poor diet?" Tonks demanded as she took the bottles. Her heart stopped as she considered what that could mean.

"It's fairly common in children that grew up with muggles," Madame Pomfrey sighed. "Over indulgent parents letting their children eat nothing but junk food. Children need vegetables, pity so many parents don't understand that."

"Oh." Tonks relaxed. "I understand, I'll make sure he has a better diet while he's at Hogwarts. What about Hermione?"

"Ms. Granger is in excellent health, I noted a few things that could turn into long term problems in her file to look into later, but there's nothing you need worry about now. Your extra lessons can proceed as planned."

"Thank you, Madame Pomfrey."

"It's nothing I wouldn't have done in the next few weeks anyway." Poppy grinned. "Though I won't say it wasn't nice to get a bit of work done early for once."

"I bet." Tonks giggled. "Have a good evening then."

"You as well, Ms. Tonks."

Tonks gave them a light workout that night. Having pressed them to their limits the night before, she was content to give them a light workout before hustling them off to bed.

Tonks entered the Hufflepuff Common Room and was immediately set upon by two excited first years.

"Did you have a good study session, Tonks?" Susan asked eagerly.

"Surprised to see that you two are still up," Tonks said to the two girls.

"We were waiting for you," Susan announced. "Hannah didn't want to go to sleep without saying goodnight."

The other girl just blushed and muttered something incomprehensible.

"Glad you decided to cause I've got something to ask the two of you." Tonks squatted down to eye level. "Hermione asked me if you two could join the detentions and I told her that I didn't mind. So if the two of you want to join the three of us then you're welcome to."

The shining looks in their eyes was answer enough and the two girls joined the 'Detention Session' the next night.

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Tonks woke up with a grin, it was Christmas day, her favorite time of the year. She threw on her robes and headed out of her dormitories and into the Great Hall for breakfast.

"Hey there, kiddo," Tonks said with a happy grin as she walked up to the Gryffindor table.

"Hello, Cousin Tonks," Harry said brightly. "Merry Christmas."

"And to you too," she replied as she dumped a package, crudely wrapped with the sports section of a newspaper, into his lap. "Hope you like it."

"I hope you like this too," Harry said shyly. In his hand was a small package wrapped in bubblegum pink paper. "Hermione and Professor McGonagall helped me pick it out."

"Budge over," Tonks ordered. She settled herself next to the boy. "Now open it up."

Harry opened the paper to find a long grey scarf which unrolled to reveal a pair of glasses. "Wow," Harry enthused. He immediately switched out his old glasses and threw the scarf around his neck. "Thank you, Tonks."

"No fair." Tonks pouted. "You were supposed to look all disappointed so I could give you, your other present."

"Why would I be disappointed?" Harry asked in confusion. "This has been the best christmas ever."

"Glad you think so," Tonks sighed. "But I'm still disappointed that you ruined all my fun." She pulled a small cube that looked to be about the same size and shape of a six sided playing die out of her pocket and opened it, then opened it again, and again until it was half the size of Harry's trunk. "Here you go, dead useful these things are."

"What is it?" Harry asked curiously.

"Fold box," Tonks replied. "It'll carry anything you can fit in it, also charmed so that you can't loose it without working at it."

"Thank you, Tonks." Harry stared at her, not knowing how to react.

"We're family," Tonks said softly. She pulled him into a hug. Tonks didn't like the way the boy stiffened when she put her arms around him, it was filed away with the other signs she'd observed, signs that were painting a picture she didn't like. "Had to spend my bonus on something, figured it might as well be stuff for us."

"Bonus?"

"I didn't tell you?" Tonks exclaimed. "I'm getting hired right after graduation, got accepted to first class this summer and I'm not even gonna have to wait till my NEWT results come in before I go."

"Congratulations," Harry cheered.

"Thanks, I'm just glad that being a metamorph finally paid off. Director Bones said that she'd be damned if she couldn't find a use for someone that could change their appearance without using a charm or potion."

"That's great," Harry said. "Now open the present we got you," he demanded.

"I remember when you were a polite little firsty," Tonks sighed dramatically. "Now you've been led astray by the wicked elements in the castle." She eagerly ripped open the package, then let out a low



whistle when she saw what he'd given her. With trembling hands she reached into the box and pulled out a gleaming gold pocket watch.

"The watchmaker said it would help protect you from most mid level curses and that would help you with your balance." He grinned up at her.

"Brat," Tonks said playfully.

"And if you hit the button on the side, it lets you know if there's anyone hiding within fifty meters of you. There's loads more things it does, but those were the only things I remember."

"How'd you get this?" Tonks demanded. "These things are worth a fortune and there's supposed to be a two year waiting list."

"I'm Harry Potter," he pointed out. "The watchmaker insisted on putting this together for me after I told him it was for my Auror cousin."

"I just told you I got accepted into a class five minutes ago," Tonks exclaimed. She got a sudden suspicion. "Or did you do something to help my application?"

"Why would I?" Harry asked in confusion. "You're great, there's no way they weren't gonna hire you."

"Most perspective Aurors spend anywhere from three to five years after graduation before they get accepted into one of the academy," Tonks pointed out. "I know I told you that."

"And I know that they'd put you in the first class they could because you're great," Harry retorted. "And Hermione agrees."

"Guess I can't argue with that," Tonks exclaimed. "Come on."

"Where are we going?" Harry asked.

"To the Hufflepuff Common Room," Tonks announced.

"Am I allowed in there?"

"I'd like to find one of them that's willing to tell me off for being loyal to my cousin by allowing him in with us," Tonks replied with a grin.

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Filch glared down at the three students he'd caught lurking around the halls.

"First years out after curfew?" The caretaker said in delight. "Wait till . . ."

"They're with me," Tonks said loudly. "Sorry about that, Mr. Filch. I didn't mean to leave them like that."

"With you?" The caretaker asked dumbly.

"Detention," Tonks agreed. "Discipline needs to be grown, I can't expect them to learn it on their own."

"Exactly," Filch agreed in delight. "What are you making them do?"

"Mostly spell practice and exercise," Tonks replied. "But they've recently done something to annoy me." She favored the nervous children with a stern look. "So I'm going to have to think of something really unpleasant to make them understand just how annoyed I am."

"I'll leave you to it then," Filch said with a grin.

"Thank you, Mr. Filch." Tonks kept her eyes on the children.

"We can explain," Hermione said after the caretaker had left. "We would have told you earlier but we promised that we'd keep quiet."

"I don't like having to shade the truth to cover for you three," Tonks said flatly. "Weasley."

"Yes, ma'am?" Ron asked nervously.

"Speak," she commanded.

"Hagrid had a dragon," Ron said quickly. "We just gave it to my brother Charlie."

"Back to your dorms, Weasley," Tonks barked.

Ron didn't need to be told twice, he turned and was down the hall in a flash.

"Rescuing dragons, huh?" Tonks asked with a grin.

"I'm sorry I didn't tell you," Harry said glumly.

"Bugger that," Tonks laughed. "I don't need to know everything that happens in your life, that's why it's called your life and not mine. No, you have a completely different reason to be sorry."

"What's that?" Harry asked, almost afraid to hear the answer.

"You should be sorry you got caught," Tonks replied. "And if your aren't, you will be. You WILL be." She pasted a sinister look on her face that caused both children to dissolve into giggles. "You think the mustache was a bit too much?" Tonks sighed. "What have we learned?"

"If we're going to break the rules, don't get caught," Hermione suggested.

"Right," Tonks agreed. "And what do you think I'm going to teach you?"

"How to not get caught?" Harry asked.

"Absolutely," Tonks agreed. "Now get to bed, both of you."

IIIIIIIIII

Harry's eyes widened in shock as the pieces all fell into place. It stood to reason that with Dumbledore gone, Snape was going to make his try for the stone tonight.

"Come on," he barked. "We gotta go tell Tonks what's happening." With that said, Harry took off in a dead run towards the Hufflepuff dormitories.

"Now what?" Ron asked. "Door's shut, how are we gonna get her?"

"Wait here," Harry ordered. He stepped in closer to whisper the password. "I'll be right back." Ignoring the redhead's shocked look, Harry darted into the Common Room. Luck was with him in that Susan and Hannah were both sitting on one of the room's large fluffy couches.

"What's wrong?" Susan asked, seeing his manner.

"I need you to go get my cousin," Harry said. "Quickly."

"Tonks isn't here right now," Susan said.

"I think she's down at the Quidditch Pitch," Hannah added.

Harry sagged. "Thank you." He turned to walk back into the hall, not noticing that the two girls had chosen to follow him out. What was he going to do, by the time he found Tonks it might be too late for her to stop Snape's theft of the stone.

"Harry?" Susan said softly. "What's wrong?"

The boy straightened out, suddenly knowing what he had to do. "Go find my cousin," Harry ordered. "Tell her that Snape is going after the Philosopher's stone and that I'm going to try to stop him or . . . or slow him down till she can get there."

"Bloody hell," Ron said softly. "Tell her that we're going to try to stop him," he corrected. "Right, Hermione?"

"Right," Hermione sighed. "Just hurry."

"Come on, Hannah," Susan said. "The sooner we find Tonks the better."

"Good luck," Hannah said with a blush before rushing to catch up with her best friend.

It took the two Hufflepuffs five precious minutes to find Tonks and two more to explain the situation.

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Hermione smiled as the answer came to her. "Close your eyes," she yelled. "I'm going to use the flashbang charm Tonks taught us yesterday."

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"Professor McGonagall," Tonks bellowed, seeing the old woman down the hall.

"What trouble has Mr. Potter managed to get himself in now?" The old woman asked with a smile.

"He's convinced that someone is going to make an attempt to steal the Philosopher's Stone and he's gone to stop them," Tonks reported quickly. "I was on my way to get him."

"Relax," Minerva said with a smile. "The children are safe."

Tonks relaxed a bit at the Professor's assurance. "How do you figure that?" Dumbledore had warned to avoid the corridor if you did not wish to face certain death and barmy or not, the old man didn't usually joke about things like that.

"They shouldn't be able to get past the lock," Minerva assured the nervous Prefect. The old woman smiled. "The charm work on it is such that even I would have some difficulty."

"Um, Harry and the others have already gotten past it at least once," Hannah volunteered.

"They . . . what is on the other side?" Minerva demanded.

"A three headed dog," the girl squeaked.

"God damn it," Minerva growled. "Ms. Abbott," Minerva barked.

"Yes, Professor?"

"Go get Filius . . . Professor Flitwick and have him meet us outside the dog's room," she ordered. "Use those exact words."

"Yes, Professor," Hannah agreed quickly. "Professor Flitwick is to meet you outside the dog's room."

"Ms. Bones," Minerva said.

"Yes, Professor?"

"Go to Madame Pomfrey and tell her the same," Minerva ordered.

"Yes, Professor," Susan agreed.

"Run," Minerva snapped, sending the two girls off. "Ms. Tonks."

"I'm going with you," Tonks said firmly. "It's a family matter."

"I . . . come along," Minerva said softly. "I have a spare dragon hide vest that should fit you."

The two women darted into Minerva's rooms and Tonks was shocked to see the normally neat Professor tearing apart the room in an effort to get everything together quickly.

"Put this on," Minerva ordered, thrusting the vest into Tonk's arms. "It'll provide some protection."

"Yes, Professor," Tonks agreed as she slipped it on.

The met the rest of the rescue party at the entrance to the 'dog's room.'

"Mind taking point, Filius?" Minerva ordered politely.

"Not at all, Minerva."

"Behind me, Ms. Tonks," Minerva said firmly. "Poppy, take the rear."

"Yes, Professor," Tonks agreed.

Filius took a deep breath, eased open the door, and was nearly bowled over by a hysterical Hermione.

"Tonks," the girl sobbed.

The Prefect squatted down and wrapped the girl in a comforting hug. "Tell me what happened," she said softly.

IIIIIIII

Harry woke up to someone softly snoring and he looked over to find his cousin sleeping in a chair next to his bed. Feeling warmer and safer than he could ever recall feeling in his life, he wormed his hand out from under the covers to hold Tonks' before drifting back to sleep.

His next awakening wasn't nearly as pleasant as Tonks was awake to greet him and spent the next three hours scolding him and doing her best to drive into his head why going after experienced Dark Lords was such a bad idea for a first year student.

"I'm sorry," Harry said glumly as the lecture wound down. "But I couldn't let Voldemort get the stone."

"I know," Tonks sighed. She reached up and mussed his hair. "And I'm proud of you. Just try not to make a habit of it, okay?"

"Okay," Harry agreed with a smile, basking in the sensation of having someone that cared about him.

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"Bout time they gave us a bloody pass," Tonks grumbled as she signed out of the Academy. While her classmates went out to stuff their faces with forbidden sugary delights, Nymphadora was on her way to find out why Harry hadn't replied to any of her letters.

It didn't take her long to find the address Harry had given her before leaving school and the door was answered by a thoroughly unpleasant man that looked to be porously close to a coronary.

"I'm looking for Harry Potter," she said politely.

"No one by that name here," Vernon growled, damned freaks. "Now get off my land before I call the police.

Tonks jammed her foot in the door to keep the man from slamming it. "Where's Harry?" She demanded.

"I don't know what you're . . ." Vernon began.

"You tell me where he is right bloody now," Tonks interrupted. Something about this whole situation smelled to her newly developing instincts.

Vernon grabbed the uppity girl's collar with one meaty fist and pulled her close. "Listen here you little tart," he growled. "This is my house and . . ." A sharp pain in his elbow reflexively caused him to release his captive, another in his knee sent him howling to the ground.

"No," Tonks hissed, "you listen here you fat tub of lard. You either tell me where Harry is or I'll beat you to a bloody pulp." She punctuated her threat with a boot to the ribs.

"Upstairs," Vernon whimpered, "door with all the locks."

Tonks turned away from the fallen man and sprinted up the stairs. Her wand made quick work of the locks on the door and she burst in, fearing the worst.



“Tonks?” Harry said in shock.

“You okay, Harry?” Tonks demanded. She stepped in and gave the boy a quick pat down to check for injuries, frowning a bit whenever a sharp intake of breath revealed another bruised area.

“I'm fine,” Harry assured his cousin.

“I didn't get any letters from you,” Tonks explained as she wrapped the boy in a hug. “Worried me half to death.”

“I didn't get any from you either,” Harry replied. “Or anyone else.”

“Glad to see that you're in one piece,” Tonks said affectionately. “You want to stay here?” Tonks asked. Not that it mattered, she had no intention of leaving him in this hole.

“No,” Harry said.

“Pack up everything you want to take with you then, we're leaving.”

“Okay, Tonks.” The grin on Harry's face threatened to split his face, this had the makings of the best summer ever.

A quick blasting charm provided an exit for Hedwig and a quick shrinking charm made Harry's trunk more manageable. Taking her cousin by the hand, Tonks led Harry outside and sat him down on the curb. “Wait out here for a bit,” she ordered. “I need to take care of something inside before we go.”

“Alright, Tonks,” Harry agreed.

She put up a quick silencing charm as she walked back into the house. Vernon had managed to crawl to the phone while she was otherwise occupied and he was frantically working the dial to get the police.

“None of that,” Tonks said as she summoned the receiver out of the wall.

"What do you want with me?" Vernon asked fearfully.

"Just wanted to have a little discussion about why Harry has so many bruises," Tonks replied calmly. Her left hand disappeared into her pocket and emerged with what Vernon first thought to be a leather insole. "Just between you, and me."

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Dumbledore frowned as several of his instruments began acting in ways they never had before but as they didn't indicate that their target was in any danger, he soon put the matter out of his mind and got back to more important matters. It was a mistake he'd soon come to regret.

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Tonks emerged from the house a few minutes later and took a firm hold of Harry's Hand.

"This isn't going to be very fun," she warned. "Just take a deep breath and close your eyes."

"Okay," Harry agreed.

"On the count of three. One, two . . ." they both disappeared with a pop. "You okay, Harry?" Tonks asked.

Harry bent over and for a few minutes, it looked as if he were going to empty his stomach onto the floor. "I'm okay," Harry agreed. "Just feel a little strange."

"It gets better after you've done it a few times," Tonks said soothingly. "And it's no so bad when you're with someone that's more experienced."

"What's that on your pants?" Harry asked curiously, focusing on something to take his mind off the sensation in his stomach.

"Nothing to worry about," Tonks dodged the question. "Scourgify." She watched in satisfaction as Vernon's blood and tooth fragments disappeared. "Okay, now?"

"Yes, cousin Tonks."

"Come on." Tonks led the boy down a dizzying array of halls and across one large office bay before coming to a nervous halt in front of an open doorway.

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Amelia looked up when someone knocked on her door frame. "Enter."

"Um, Auror Trainee Nymphadora Tonks, ma'am." Tonks shuffled nervously in the doorway.

"I know," Amelia said blandly. "What can I do for you, Trainee Tonks?"

"Uh . . . you said at . . . when you gave your speech at the opening ceremony, you said that your door was always open if we had a problem."

"I also said it had better be bloody good or I'd make you pray for death," Amelia agreed in the same bland tone.

"Uh . . ." Tonks bit her lower lip, then glanced at something outside the office. "This is pretty important."

"Close the door and come in then," Amelia suggested. She waited a few uncomfortable seconds before looking back up from her paperwork. "Out with it."

"Uh . . . it's a family matter, ma'am."

"Does that mean that you're not going to tell me anything?" Amelia asked neutrally.

"No, ma'am," Tonks said quickly, "just trying to explain."

“Continue then.”

“Yes, ma'am. Uh . . . the thing is ma'am, I don't have a lot of family I'm willing to . . . not on mum's side anyway, the Blacks are . . . that is to say . . .”

“I get the picture,” Amelia said dryly. “Get to the point.”

“Well, one of my cousins on my mum's side . . . one of the good ones, er . . . the only good one. Well, the thing is he's staying with family from the other side, from his mum's side, they're not related to me.”

“I told you to get to the point,” Amelia prompted.

“I got worried when he didn't reply to any of my letters so I went to see if anything was wrong on my first pass,” Tonks said quickly. “I got to his residence and was met by a thoroughly unpleasant man. The man denied knowing my cousin and tried to assault me. I put the man on the ground and then threatened to . . . uh . . . I mean, persuaded him to tell me where my cousin is. I found my cousin locked in a small room on the second floor. A quick examination revealed several minor injuries and . . . uh, I'd like my pass to be extended to take him to St. Mungos to make sure I didn't miss anything after this meeting if that's possible.”

“Very possible,” Amelia said with a grin, “was that all? You wanted permission to stay out to take your cousin to the hospital?”

“Afraid there's more, ma'am.”

“On with it then.” Amelia sighed, it looked like it was going to be one of those days.

“There isn't anyone else that can take care of him, ma'am,” Tonks said quickly. “Mum and I aren't speaking at the moment. Even if we were, she and da are in America promoting their new book and I'm . . . I threw the contact information in the fire so I don't know how to get in touch with them.”

"What a mess," Amelia groaned. "Where is your cousin now?"

"Waiting outside, ma'am."

"Call him in," Amelia ordered.

Tonks disappeared and returned a few minutes with a scruffy young boy clad in rags.

"Good afternoon," Amelia said gently, "my name is Amelia Bones. You can call me Amelia, what's your . . . bloody hell, he can't be."

"Madame Bones," Tonks began nervously, "meet my cousin, Harry Potter."

AN: Yes, I stole the fold box from Robert Heinlein's book 'The Glory Road.' Always remember that it's full of rocks. It gets a bit thin in places and that's because I couldn't think of anything meaningful and I didn't want to put in useless filler. Typos by Innortal

AN02: I just discovered a massive folder filled with private messages from and a few other places so if you've sent me a message in the last six or so months (looks like the earliest dates) and I haven't replied, sorry about that. Working on fixing the problem right now.

And now for some Omake/loose scenes

Omake: Mother

"If not making a career as an Auror, what does your mother expect you to do?"

"I think she expects me to run off with some bloke she hates to have a barely legitimate daughter," Tonks replied. "Judging from her example anyway."

"Barely legitimate?"

"Born a week and a half after the wedding," Tonks said absently.

Omake: IA

"The Chief Warlock has filed a complaint against you for excessive force," Amelia explained. "I'm afraid I have to ask you a few questions."

"Yes, Madame Bones." Tonks looked lost. "Why is he doing this, I thought Dumbledore was supposed to be good?"

"It's politics," Amelia replied. "He wants Harry back with the Dursley family for some reason. He's hoping to push me into withdrawing my objections to that course of action."

"How is this going to do that?"

"The easiest way to protect you is to give in to his demands," Amelia answered bluntly. "If I choose to throw you to the wolves, he sweeps in and makes the point that 'the-boy-who-lived' can't be left in the care of a disbarred and dishonored Auror."

"I understand boss," Tonks said glumly.

"Now then, what spell did you use to soften Harry's uncle up?" Amelia asked.

"Didn't use a spell, ma'am."

"Oh?" Amelia perked up. "What did you use then?"

Tonks reached into the left side of her robe and pulled out a long piece of leather. "Used a sap, ma'am."

"Is it enchanted in anyway?" Amelia asked intently.

"Not yet, ma'am."

"Then we can close the investigation right now," Amelia said happily.

"Huh?"

"You used no magic whatsoever," Amelia explained. "Our use of force procedures don't cover non-magical items and techniques."

"So, Harry's safe?"

"Harry's safe," Amelia confirmed. "And I didn't know they were still teaching you to use those things at the academy, thought they'd stopped after Moody retired."

"They aren't teaching it at the academy, my granddad taught me. He was a constable till he retired a few years ago."

"What are they teaching in the close combat class then?"

"Retreat to a safe distance and try to engage in a magical duel," Tonks said unhappily, "I got extra duty for asking how to keep from getting hexed in the back during the retreat part."

"I see." It was plain to see that the woman was not happy. "It looks as if I'm going to have to take a closer interest in our training curriculum."

Omake: Meeting

Tonks glared across the table at the Dursleys. "You ever lay a finger on Harry, you ever even come near him again and I'll beat you to death."

"You can't just . . ." the Solicitor blustered.

"Shut up," Tonks interrupted. She turned back to Vernon and fixed him with a glare that would have done her boss proud. "You hear me, you fat tub of lard?"

"I . . . we hear you," Vernon squeaked.

Omake: Third Year

"How's your Patronus," Amelia asked as the young Auror walked into her office.

"Could be better," Tonks admitted. "What's up, boss?"

"Your cousin was attacked by Dementors," Amelia said gently.

"What . . . but . . . I just put him on the train," the Auror looked lost. "Is he?"

"He's fine," Amelia assured the younger woman. "Just a little shook up."

Tonks let out the breath she'd been holding. "Permission to get a few hours to visit him?"

"Denied," Amelia replied. "New assignment."

"Yes, boss," Tonks said with a look of disappointment on her face.

"Cheer up, you'll like this one." Amelia slid a file across her desk. "It is the position of the Minister that Dementors are the best and most cost effective way of securing Hogwarts from Sirius Black, it's my position that a team of Aurors would work better. We compromised by agreeing to send a liaison from my office to coordinate things."

"Yes, boss," Tonks agreed happily.

"Officially that's all you're going to do, unofficially I want you there to keep the children safe from Fudge's folly and to keep an eye on that cousin of yours."

"Sure bet he's at the center of whatever's happening," Tonks agreed. "Happy to be of service, boss."

Some notes and Omake by Ben Russell-Gough

"So, Dora, you been to see your little boyfriend?" Megan Perks yelled out, causing chuckles and wolf-whistles to echo around the Hufflepuff common room.

"Megs, for the thousandth bloody time, he's my cousin! As well as being six years younger than me! How sick is that?"



"Dora, healthy wizards and witches can live for eleven or twelve decades," Violet Parkinson remarked without looking up from her DADA text. "In that context, six years isn't /that/ much difference." The pureblood young woman continued, either unaware of or uncaring of Tonks' bright red face and violently cycling hair colors. "Add that you are both of the Black line and are both half-bloods. I'm pretty sure that a match would be seen as the ideal way for the house to get a full-blood heir without putting it under the control of another house like the Malfoys or Lestranges."

Things will really hot up after Tonks takes charge of Harry in the Y1/Y2 summer. Remember that she is a trainee auror, so she won't have /much/ time at home. This means that Harry will instead be hanging out in the magical world with other light-aligned half- and purebloods, especially those with noble

backgrounds like Andromeda. A closer friendship with Neville? Strained relationship with the Weasleys (the Blacks are a 'dark' family and given Molly and Ron's sometimes very judgemental attitudes about blood heritage, this could cause some trouble). The practical upshot of this is that, by Y3, Harry will probably know a lot about the wizarding world and be quite savvy about politics (maybe due to Andromeda's tutoring him in his role as the future Lord Potter).

Possibly you could see Harry developing a fairly normal social life. Instead of having a pair of super-close friends and being only acquaintances with everyone else, he might end up having several close friends (Hermione, Neville and Luna) friendships with many others like Susan Bones, Ron and Ginny and a wide range of contacts, both those of his generation and those of his parents.

"Harry, I'd like to meet some friends of mine," Andromeda said. "I believe you already know Amelia Bones and her niece Susan?" Harry smiled and shook hands with the formidable-looking head of the DMLE. He turned to Susan and shook her hand with a smile. Much to his shock, Susan winked at him coquettishly. Harry blushed and almost didn't hear Aunt Andy introduce the Diggory family.

As Harry rejoined Tonks, the currently royal blue-haired cadet Auror leaned over to whisper in his ear. "Harry, I have only one thing to say: Watch out. I think that Director Bones and mum are plotting a betrothal contract!" Tonks couldn't help but laugh at the way her oh-so-easy to tease cousin seemed to

start to hyperventilate.

This is VERY interesting and potentially a very good story.

It would be nice to see this turned into a full-length story, but even just a multi-shot summary of how different Harry's life would be with Tonks would be interesting. Suggested Name: "Harry Potter and The Girl With A Hundred Faces".

I don't think that we would necessarily have to see Harry's canon first year experiences and friendships lost. If anything, having a Hufflepuff role model might make Harry be even closer to Ron and Hermione. That said, Ron being so willing to let Harry and Tonks rescue Hermione would probably mean that there wouldn't be the classic 'trio', just Harry being friends with Hermione and Ron

with them being civil to each other for their mutual friend.

I can honestly say that I doubt that Dumbledore would be able to keep Harry with the Dursleys. All it will take is for Aemelia to present Tonks' pensive memory in the Wizegmont and all hell will break loose. The fact that Harry was being abused (if mostly hands-off neglect, as in canon) and that he has a half-blood adult witch (of the Black line no less!) cousin would make it an open-and-shut case.

It would be up to the author to decide whether or not Harry has metamorphomagic of his own (and to what degree).

Naturally, Tonks would be Harry's 'big sister' and role model (more mischievous Harry?). Having a Hufflepuff personality type as a role model might radically change CoS. Harry might be more aware of Ginny's problems... Luna's too, depending on how the scene was written.

~\*~\*~\*~

The wraithlike blonde Ravenclaw sat down on the floor outside of Gryffindor Tower and wept. Never, not even when her ma died, had she felt so utterly alone.

"Hello there," said a masculine voice from overhead. "What seems to be the matter?"

Luna looked up into a pair of startling green eyes framed by Muggle-style corrective lenses and the scruffiest, most uncontrollable-looking black hair she had ever seen. Luna tried to suck down her sobs and stagger to her feet. "I'm sorry," she mumbled. "I'll head back to Ravenclaw Tower." The girl would have fled if a hand did not gently but unbreakably close around her upper arm. "P... Please let me go," she murmured. What was he going to do to her?

"Not until you tell me what's wrong."

"Nothing! Nothing's wrong! Please, I don't want trouble, just let me...!"

"You don't cry your heart out on the other side of the castle from your dorms for 'nothing'!" The hand released her. "Come on, what's wrong? Mabybe I can help!"

Luna blinked away her tears and took a good look at the second-year Gryffindor. Suddenly, her eyes clear, she suddenly realised /who/ had suddenly walked into her life. The girl's mouth dropped open. 'Ginny will be /so/ jealous!' she whispered in the deepest depths of her mind.

"Harry?" A bushy-brown-haired female second-year Gryffindor had appeared at the portrait entrance. "What's going on? Oh! Who's this?"

"I was just going to find out, Hermione," Harry Potter replied. "She was in tears by the Portrait Door."

Hermione walked over and smiled in an attempt at reassurance. "You poor thing? Are you homesick? Do you want us to get Professor Flitwick or one of the Ravenclaw prefects?"

"NO!" Luna's loud, terrified response startled both Gryffindors! "No! They'll just make fun of me! Please, I just need someone who'll listen to me and not be mean to me! It's been so horrible!"

Whew... don't know where that came from!

Omake by meteoricshipyards

"Hermione, did you know that you can bounce certain spells off of shiny surfaces like suits of armor," Harry asked as they entered the Great Hall.

"No. . . ." Anything else she was going to say was interrupted as several tables broke out in laughter. She followed the children's eyes to see Draco sitting with a "Kick Me" sign on his back. She looked at Harry who was trying to look innocent.

Disclaimer: A Marauders era fic.

## Old School

James woke up with a start, the last thing he remembered was facing Voldemort in a duel. "I'm dead then," he said calmly. He looked around and was surprised to find that the afterlife looked an awful lot like the Head Boy's suite. Unless . . . his heart stopped as he contemplated his situation. 'Magic is a mysterious and wonderful thing,' he reflected to himself as he looked over at his old quarters. 'Able to do anything, maybe even to give a failure like him a second chance to save his family.'

The first thing he did was pull out his mirror to contact Sirius and arrange for a meeting of the Marauders. The second thing he did was leap out of bed, throw on a robe, and rush to the Headgirl's suite for a reunion with his wife.

Just before throwing open the door, James froze, a terrible thought had just occurred to him. What if it wasn't a second chance, what if there was no Lily, what if this was hell? He was willing to admit, if only to himself, that he hadn't been the best person in the world. A better man wouldn't have wasted so much time on silly pranks, would have spent more time studying, would have . . . would have found a way to save his family. Slowly, hesitantly, he raised his hand and tentatively knocked on the door.

"What is it?" Lily's voice called thorough the door.

"Lil . . . Lils, is that you?" James called back, his heart pounding so fast that he feared his ribs would burst.

"Who else would it be?" Lily demanded sarcastically. The door opened and she glared at him with her hands on her hips. "And since when do you knock?"

"Lily," James whispered. His arms wrapped around her and he pulled her close. "I'm sorry," he murmured. "I wasn't good enough and I'm sorry."

"It's okay, James," Lily said soothingly, more than a bit confused about what was going on. "It'll all be okay." Her head cocked to the side as the wards informed her that there was someone at the door. "Let go, ya big git, we've got someone at the door."

"They're here then," James' voice cracked. "Come on, I need to tell you something very important." He reached the entrance in three big strides and opened it to admit his friends.

"Sirius will be along shortly," Remus said, taking his spot on the couch.

"Went down to the kitchen to have the elves send up some breakfast," Peter explained, claiming his own spot. Long familiarity with the moods and habits of James Potter allowed Peter to pick up the fact that something was wrong, very wrong. A quick glance at Lily confirmed that she was just as confused as the rest of them. Not relationship trouble then, Peter frowned. "Everything alright, mate?"

"It will be," James replied.

"Okay then," Peter agreed. And that, he thought sourly, answered none of the questions swirling around in my head.

It wasn't long before the last member of their group arrived. "What's up, James?" Sirius asked as he flopped down between Remus and Peter.

"And make it quick," Lily added, "I need to study for my charms exam." She glanced at her boyfriend out of the corner of her eye.

"To start with, I will swear on anything that this isn't a prank. I'll swear on my life and magic if my word isn't enough for you."

"Nobody's asking you to do that," Sirius said quickly. The boy cast a worried glance at Lily.

"What's bothering you, James?" The lone girl of the group asked softly. She took a step towards him and put a comforting hand on his elbow.

"I remember graduating Hogwarts and getting married to the girl of my dreams," James began, "we had a son named Harry. He had his mother's eyes, his father's hair, Sirius' nose, Peter's chin, and Remus' ears."

"Why such mixed up features?" Remus laughed.

"Everything but the hair and chin belonged to Lily," James said with a weak smile, "and Sirius said that it wasn't fair . . . heh . . . insisted that he get something too. My perfect little boy, my wonderful little Harry." He pulled Lily close.

"James?" She turned a pair of wide, worried eyes to her boyfriend.

"We got word that Voldemort was targeting us," he continued, "so my wonderful wife." He squeezed Lily. "Reconstructed an ancient charm that would hide us from everyone that hadn't been told our location by the secret keeper. The last thing I remember is an unfortunately short duel with Voldemort."

"I'm sorry, mate," Sirius sighed, "guess I wasn't strong enough to keep the secret."

"You insisted we choose Peter," James said with a half smile, "said they'd expect you."

"It was me?" Peter squeaked. "You should have never trusted me with the secret."

"Sirius and Lily were the only ones that knew," James said softly, "they must have captured him first and . . ."

"And I couldn't bloody keep my mouth shut," Sirius grunted, "can't blame you for talking when I did."

"What about me?" Remus asked.

"There were rumors that Voldemort had a spell to control Dark Creatures," James explained, "we couldn't chance it. If it were just me and Lils then we'd have been willing to risk it, but we couldn't . . . he was our perfect baby boy." Tears flowed freely down James' face.

"You did the right thing then," Remus assured his friend.

"What are we gonna do, James?" Peter asked intently. He knew his friends and he knew that above all, the Marauders protected their own.

"First, we're gonna make sure we have a safe place to hide," James replied, "somewhere far away from here. I'm not gonna let that bastard get my son."

Everyone else at the table nodded their agreement.

"Second, we're going to cut loose and show the Dark Lord that you don't mess with the Marauders." He looked around the table. "Who's with me?"

"We all are," Peter said confidently. "Right?"

"Right," Lily agreed.

"As if you had to ask," Sirius said seriously.

"I'll be in the library," Remus announced, "pranks aren't going to cut it. We're going to need an assortment of new offensive spells."

"What was its name?" Lily asked softly.

"What's name?" James replied automatically.

"The name of that ancient charm," Lily persisted. "If we're lucky, I've got more time to work on it now than I did in . . . well . . ."

"The fidelius charm," James replied. "You said you found a reference to it in the Restricted section."



"That helps," Lily said brightly. "Maybe I can figure out a way to strengthen it now that I know we have more time."

"What about your charms exam?"

"I doubt Professor Flitwick will mark me down after I tell him that I was spending all my study time reconstructing a lost charm," replied Lily, impishly.

They spent the next few minutes planning their day before each of them departed to accomplish their own assigned tasks.

|||||||

James stepped up to the charms professor's office door and knocked on it three times. This was it, his first step in becoming the sort of man he should have been the first time around.

"Yes," the diminutive man answered. "What can I do for you, James?"

"Professor Flitwick, I need to speak with you," James said firmly.

"One of those conversations?"

"Yes," James agreed.

Filius sighed. "Come in then and tell me what this is all about."

"I need to learn how to fight," James said as he took his seat.

"Revenge for what happened to your parents?"

"To protect the family I have left," James replied.

"Lily and the others," Filius said slowly.

"Please, Professor," James said intently. "Please."

"I'd considered apprenticing Lily but I suppose that isn't going to happen if your relationship is that close," Filius mused.

"We haven't set any plans in stone, but with the times . . ." James trailed off.

"Do what you can today, for you may not be alive tomorrow," Filius agreed. "Is Lily also interested in lessons?"

"Yes," James agreed.

Filius thought it over for a few moments. "Have her speak with me later then," he said finally. "I have a few charms that she might like to go over."

"What about the rest of us?" James persisted.

"I'd suggest that you speak with Professor McGonagall about using transfiguration in combat settings," Filius offered.

"So you're not going to teach us?" James's face fell.

"I didn't say that." The small man smiled. "Tell me, James. When building a house, what do you do first, the foundation or the roof?"

"Yes, Professor," James said.

"Come back when you can run five miles in forty five minutes, do one hundred pushups, two hundred sit-ups without stopping, and swim across the lake and back. Then and only then will you be able to benefit from what I have to teach you."

"Thank you, Professor." James gave a deep, formal bow. "I owe you more than you will ever know."

IIIIIIII

Peter clutched the box to his chest, ignoring the scrambling claws he could hear inside. He knew the others wouldn't understand what he

was doing, they'd try to stop him, saying it was too dangerous, but he couldn't afford to be the weak link any longer.

Harry... the marauder's child was depending on him, as were Lily and James, even if they didn't know it.

There were secrets to the animagus transformation that he'd ferreted out that he hadn't shared with the others exactly because they were too dangerous.

Part of the reason animagus could run with a werewolf and not worry about getting infected by lycanthropy or even eaten was due to their shared origins. Blood and magic fueled the change, but the animagus transformation blended with their inner nature, rather than having one imposed on them.

The reason Remus had changed so little was probably because his animal nature was a wolf or something similar.

But there was a way to change your inner nature, not a lot but some and the difference between a wolf and a dog wasn't nearly as large as people thought it was.

And neither was the difference between the common black rats that people raised as pets and the brown rats that could be found in sewers and warfs the world over.

Peter was rather timid, not a big fan of confrontations, fitting quite well with his animagus form, but had he been... braver, tougher, stronger, well his animagus form would have been a different type of rat.

What he was doing now wasn't changing himself to change his animagus form, he was changing his animagus form to change himself and if he failed... well Remus would have a friend who knew intimately what he was going through, albeit with buck teeth and a tail.

IIIIIIII

Sirius awoke with a start the next morning as he was unceremoniously dumped out of bed and onto the floor of the dorms.

"Wake up," James said blearily.

"What in the bloody hell are you doing, getting us up this early?" Sirius demanded.

"Breakfast is served in three hours, the library opens in four, and we've got a lot of work to do." James smirked. "Unless you were all talk when you said you'd be willing to do everything it took."

"Didn't realize that everything it took included getting up at bloody four am," Sirius protested as he pulled on his boots. "Was in the bloody library till it closed last night."

"And I was there next to you," James retorted. "Flitwick won't teach us till we can pass his bloody physical test."

"The others up already?" Sirius asked.

"Remus and Peter are," James agreed. "And Lily's the one that woke me up."

"Let's go then." Sirius laughed. "The more we bleed in training, the more the Death Eaters will bleed when it's real."

"And the less we will," James agreed.

IIIIIIII

Lily plastered a confident grin on her face as she stepped into the hospital wing. It had been almost a month since that first terrible morning when James had given them their purpose and they all had their roles to play, all of them except her. Sure, she was researching several wards and charms to be used in the defense of their future home, and granted she was learning offensive magic along side the rest of the others but . . . Lily sighed, it didn't feel like she was doing enough.

James was a driven man, a man determined to keep his family alive and that attitude had, for lack of a better term infected them all.

Remus was spending every spare minute in the library, Peter was off god knows where, and Sirius was practicing offensive magic until casting it became second nature. That left her to learn the only vital bit of magic that their little group did not already possess. Boys, she sniffed, spending all their time learning how to break things.

"What can I do for you, Ms. Evens?" Poppy's voice dragged Lily back to reality.

"I'm sorry," Lily said with a faint blush on her cheeks. "I was lost in thought."

"A good place to be," Poppy replied with a smile. "You aren't feeling sick, are you?"

"No," Lily assured the woman. "I was wondering if I could learn a bit of healing magic from you."

"You'd like to become a healer?" Poppy asked in surprise.

"Maybe eventually," Lily demurred. "For now, I'd just like to learn enough to . . . with everything that's happening I thought it might be a good idea to know a bit of healing."

"I understand," Poppy said warmly.

"The boys are all focused on learning how to stay alive in a fight," Lily confessed. "I thought it might be a good idea to learn how to keep them alive afterwards."

"Not to mention how useful knowing a bit of healing will be after you become a mother," Poppy added cheerfully, smiling at the girl's blush. "Wait one moment." She dashed into her office and reemerged with a slip of paper clutched in her hands. "This is a permission slip to check a few books on healing out of the restricted wing. Come back after you've read the first three and we can get started on the practical stuff."

"Thank you, Madame Pomfrey."

"And don't hesitate to ask me if you have any questions," Poppy added to the girl's retreating back.

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While Lily spoke with the School Healer, three of the other Marauders were having a meeting of their own.

"I suppose the two of you are wondering why I brought you here," Peter began, he had an expression of resolute stoicism.

Sirius and Remus shared a look.

"What's up?" Sirius asked.

"I want you to double check my formula," Peter replied. He thrust a scrap of paper into Remus' hands. "Always good to have a second opinion, even if your second opinion isn't as good at the theory."

"Or the practice," Sirius laughed.

Remus studied the paper for a few minutes. When he realized the formula's purpose, the color drained out of his face.

"It's all my fault," Peter explained firmly. "I couldn't keep my bloody mouth shut."

"What is it?" Sirius asked. He leaned over Remus' shoulder and squinted at the paper.

"Insurance," Peter said. "In case I ever get captured."

"James would never agree to this," Remus protested.

"That's why I didn't tell him," Peter said with a weak grin. "I'm not going to be the weak link any longer."

"When we mix it, we're gonna need at least two doses," Sirius said after a few moments of contemplation. "Only reason they got to you was because I couldn't keep my mouth shut either, I'm sorry, mate."

"You would have held out as long as you could," Peter tried to console his friend. "Longer than I would have."

"I'm not so sure," Sirius said with a weak smile. "But I promise that I won't talk if it happens again."

"Neither will I," Peter agreed.

"And I make three," Remus sighed. "No one talks, no one betrays his brothers."

|||||||

Intensely motivated, it didn't take long for the group to reach Flitwick's minimum standards and shortly thereafter, they learned what a harsh taskmaster the Professor could be.

"Again," Flitwick barked. "You wanted help, help is what you'll get."

They dragged themselves off the floor and prepared to run through the old sadist's drills. They went through this for several more weeks until the old man backed off a bit, grudgingly telling them that they were starting to become adequate. They were ready to go operational.

"It's time to start removing problems," Sirius said eagerly.

"It's time to start gathering information," Peter corrected.

"You want us to spend more time in the bloody library?" Sirius whined.

"I want to see if a rat can sneak into the Slytherin common rooms without being noticed," Peter retorted.

"It's a good idea," Remus interjected.

"Yes," James agreed. "It is. Alright, see what you can do while the rest of us." He sighed.

"Whipped," Sirius chuckled. "Sure you should be wearing a tux at the wedding? Might confuse people about who wears the pants."

"Sure you want Amelia Bones to find out who put that snake in her bed last year?" James retorted. "Cause she's gonna find out if you keep pushing it."

"I'll just be going then," said Peter as he walked out the door. "Back in a few hours."

"Good luck, mate," Remus called after him.

"And be bloody careful," Sirius added.

Peter shifted into rat form and scurried through the nearest crack in the wall. It always shocked him just how small a space he could squeeze his body through.

|||||

Snape was aware of two things when he awoke. The first was that he appeared to be restrained, the second was that someone had taken the time to remove his escape kit.

"He's waking up," a muffled voice announced.

"Take the blindfold off," another ordered.

Harsh light blinded him Snape for a moment after the rag was ripped off his face. Straining his eyes, he soon recognized his captors. "Potter," Snape spat.

"Severus," James said calmly. "I suppose you wonder what's happening?"

"What's happening is that you've finally gone too far," Snape growled. "You'll be expelled for this."

"I don't think that will happen," James disagreed.



"When I tell . . ."

"You won't," James interrupted. "Because if it comes to that, you'll be dead."

The tone of utter sincerity in his foe's voice chilled Snape to the bone. Whoever this was, it was not the James Potter he knew and loathed. Snape closed his mouth and glared at the other boy.

They stared at each other for a few seconds until James decided to break the silence, "I've brought you here to offer you my hand."

"In friendship?" Snape snorted in disbelief.

"In truce," James corrected. "Too much has happened for either of us to ever be friends."

"That's one thing we can agree on, Potter." Snape scowled. "Why should I accept your offer?"

"Because I'll kill you if you don't," James said bluntly. "I want you to swear an unbreakable vow to never act against me and my family and to never become a Death Eater. In return I will leave you alone." It was a bit more complicated than that, but he figured the man had the gist of it.

"Black and the others too?"

"All of us," Sirius agreed. "We're playing a very different game now and we can't be bothered with petty annoyances."

"Something you should know," James spoke. "If it were up to me, you'd be dead and in a shallow grave. Lily asked me to give you a chance and that's what I'm doing."

Snape thought it over for a few moments. There was no doubt in his mind that they would kill him if he didn't do what they said. "Agreed, Potter," he said, his mouth tasted like ashes. "Let's have the oath you want me to give."

"For what it's worth, I'm sorry it had to come to this," James said, getting as close to an apology as he could. Too much had happened on both sides for him to mean more than that, he was letting the man live because Lily wished it, he just hoped he wouldn't come to regret indulging her.

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Excited by what he'd learned, Peter ran into the Gryffindor boy's dorm and shifted back to human form in front of his friends.

"Get anything?" James asked eagerly.

"Didn't hear anything in the boy's dorms so I switched to the girl's side," Peter said with a grin, "one of my better ideas, I must admit."

"Go on."

"I learned two things," Peter said cheerfully, "first thing I learned is that Sirius' cousins are smoking hot."

"We knew that," James said impatiently.

"I don't think you knew how hot they were without their clothes," Peter countered.

"Really?" Remus asked eagerly. "That good huh?"

"I can now die happy," Peter said with a grin.

"Need to remember to research how to look at and record memories," Remus muttered to himself. Quick on that thought was another pointing out that rather than being just a joke, it would also be a useful skill to possess for the fight ahead.

"What's the other thing you learned?" James prompted impatiently.

"Narcissa is going to marry Lucius Malfoy in three days," Peter said with a proud grin.

"So?"

"So it's our chance to get rid of a Death Eater," Peter said in exasperation. It was so frustrating the way James didn't seem to have a devious bone in his body. Well, not compared to Mrs. Pettigrew's favorite son anyway. "Well, so long as Sirius is willing to do his part."

"How?"

"It's simple, all we have to do is . . ."

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Sirius had been the recipient of several glares and a number of odd looks when he'd taken his seat in the pew with the rest of the bride's family. Ignoring them all, he sat patiently and bided his time until the time was right.

"And if anyone should have an objection, let them speak now or forever hold their . . ."

"I have an objection," Sirius said loudly, "scum like him has no business marrying a daughter of the Ancient and Noble House of Black."

"How dare you," Lucius sputtered, "How dare you . . . I demand satisfaction."

"Agreed," Sirius said coldly, "outside, now."

"To death or . . ."

"Just death will do," Sirius interrupted.

"Agreed," Lucius said with a cold smile. He looked forward to putting the other man in his place. "I'm going to make you beg . . ."

"Have you ever noticed how the smallest dogs tend to bark the loudest?" Sirius asked one of the guests, seemingly ignoring Lucius.

"Outside, now," barked Lucius.

"So eager to meet your maker," Sirius drawled as he followed his victim out and onto the field of honor. His gaze swept over the crowd until he latched onto a familiar face. "Director Crouch, would you care to officiate?"

"If your opponent agrees," Crouch replied.

"I have no objections," Lucius growled, his eyes fixed on Sirius.

"Take your positions," Crouch ordered. The two men faced each other. "Duel is to the death, you will place your wands at low ready and begin when I signal with red sparks. Do you both understand and agree?"

"Yes," Lucius growled.

"Of course," Sirius agreed cheerfully. "Is there anyway we can hurry this along? I've got an appointment with a well rounded Ravenclaw that I don't want to miss."

"Well," Crouch said with a lopsided grin. "I'm normally supposed to spend a few minutes trying to get the two of you to agree to put aside your differences, or at the very least change the conditions of the duel."

"We can skip that part," Lucius said firmly.

"Then assume the position of low ready," Crouch ordered. He stepped off the field and raised his wand. "In three, two, one." Red sparks shot into the sky.

Lucius took a moment to decide what spell he was going to start with, he wanted to savor the moment, to make the blood traitor suffer. The thought that Sirius could be any sort of threat never even crossed his mind. He was Lucius Malfoy, veteran Death Eater, slayer of dozens.

His mind made up, Lucius raised his hand to fire the first curse and frowned when nothing happened. He knew he got the incantation

right. Lucius looked down at his wand hand and stared in confusion at the charred stump of ragged flesh that ended where his hand was supposed to begin. Had Black hit him with some sort of illusion?

The world seemed to spin as Lucius's legs disappeared and the arrogant man collapsed to the ground. How is this happening? Lucius wondered. I am Lucius Malfoy, I am a Death Eater, I am the reason people are afraid to leave their homes at night. How is this happening?

Lucius looked up and into the tip of Sirius' wand. "How?" He choked.

"I may have been sorted into Gryffindor, but my soul is Black," Sirius growled down at the broken body of his opponent, "say goodbye, Lucius."

"No, you can't, Black you . . ."

"Reducto," Sirius incanted. He calmly pulled a handkerchief out of his pocket to clean the spattered blood off his face as he walked out of the dueling circle.

"What have you done, you stupid child," his mother screamed shrilly.

"Look at his arm," Sirius ordered, "he's a Death Eater, a slave that didn't even have the courage to meet his end like a man. We are Blacks, Blacks bow to no one not even to some so called Dark Lord. I will not allow my blood to be sullied by such as that." With that pronouncement, Sirius disappeared with a pop, leaving a very confused old woman behind.

He reappeared in the Shrieking Shack and was unsurprised to find his best friend waiting.

"Well?" James asked.

"It's done," Sirius confirmed, "one less Death Eater."

"Good work."

"What're friends for?"

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On the orders of the matriarch of the family, the Black sisters approached their cousin after classes to pass along a short message from the rest of the family.

"Sirius," Narcissa said calmly, she held her sister Bellatrix's hand firmly, "a word."

"What do you want?" Sirius asked coldly.

"In private," Narcissa replied. "Please."

"Fine," Sirius growled lead the way. Neither girl noticed the rat that scurried up Sirius' leg and into his pocket. No way was Peter going to let his friend face two Slytherins alone.

He followed his cousins to an unused classroom and waited for them to speak.

"Our parents have carefully considered your words and have come to the conclusion that you are correct," Narcissa said calmly, "they've also reinstated you as Heir to House Black."

"I see." Sirius was proud of the fact that he managed to keep most of the shock he felt out of his voice. "Was there anything else?"

"They also decided . . . they've decided that you have your choice," Narcissa replied.

"Of what?"

"Of which Black sister you'd like to take as your bride," Narcissa explained, "Bella or myself."

"I thought that Bellatrix was engaged to . . ."

"She was," Narcissa interrupted, "mother informed her that she did not have to sully herself with that pig today." She squeezed her sister's hand. "She's still in shock."

"I see," Sirius sighed. "What do you two want?"

"What?" Narcissa gaped.

"I asked you what you wanted," Sirius repeated.

"I . . ." Narcissa looked lost. "I don't know."

"Tell me when you figure it out then," Sirius said reasonably, "was there anything else you wished to discuss?"

"Not at this time," Narcissa replied.

"Thank you, Sirius," Bellatrix spoke up.

"What?"

"Thank you for saving me from having to . . . you'd have saved me like you saved Cissy, right?" Bellatrix looked up at her cousin with wide worried eyes.

"Of course," Sirius assured the nervous girl, "the day that scum was to marry you was also to have been his last on earth." He suddenly found his arms filled with two sobbing girls and he was left wondering how things had reached this point.

It was how Lily found them fifteen minutes later. "Meeting went good then?" She said with a grin.

The two Black sisters reluctantly released their savior and forced themselves to adopt a demeanor more fitting a daughter of the House Black.

"I'm back in the family," Sirius explained. "What's up, Lils?"

"Dumbledore wants to have a word with you," Lily reported. "Now if possible, password to his office is Lollypop."

"What about?"

"He didn't say," Lily replied.

"I'm off then," Sirius announced. "Have a good night, Trixy, Cissy."

"Good night, Sirius," the girls replied.

Ignoring the other girls, Lily turned and followed her friend out of the empty classroom.

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Sirius strode into the Headmaster's office and plopped himself down on a chair.

"You wanted to speak with me?" Sirius asked boldly as he snagged a lemon drop.

"Do you have any idea why I called you here?" Dumbledore asked gravely.

"Not a clue." Sirius said innocently, thinking of any number of reasons that the Headmaster would want to speak with him.

"Your duel with Lucius Malfoy," Dumbledore sighed. "Was it really necessary to kill him?"

"He was a Death Eater," Sirius said simply. More than a bit relieved that monitoring charms he'd placed in the Hufflepuff girl's showers hadn't been discovered.

"Yes but . . ." Dumbledore was at a loss for words. "Death is permanent."

"Wouldn't have killed him if I thought he'd be able to come back from it," Sirius replied cheerfully. That wasn't strictly true. It would have



been more accurate to say that he'd have made sure to dismember the body, entomb each separate piece in stone, and then scatter the pieces to the four corners of the earth.

"The Malfoy line is going to end," Dumbledore said in exasperation. "Another pureblood house, gone."

"Someone will come along to replace them," Sirius said with a shrug. "Hopefully a better family, Malfoys were nothing more than leaches."

"I . . ." Dumbledore stared at the boy in consternation. "That will be all, Mr. Black."

Sirius snagged a few more candies for the rest of the guys on the way out and strolled out of the room.

Peter was waiting for him at the base of the stairs. "What'd Dumbledore want?"

"Something about how we shouldn't kill Death Eaters," Sirius replied, handing his friend a share of the purloined candy. "Nothing worth paying attention to."

"Does tell us that we shouldn't expect any help from the so called leader of the light," Peter said thoughtfully.

"Something to keep in mind," Sirius agreed. "Come on. Let's get back to the tower."

"No 'dates' tonight?" Peter asked with a grin.

"My well rounded Ravenclaw doesn't love me anymore," Sirius said, wiping away an imaginary tear. "I think she was just using me to do a bit of research."

"Then I look forward to reading it when it comes out," Peter laughed.

"No you don't," Sirius interjected. "No imagination on that one."

"Pity."

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Sirius was starting to get used to being rudely awakened in the middle of the night. None the less, it was still a bit disorienting and it took him a minute to gain his bearings.

"What is it?" Sirius murmured. He'd been pulled from the best dream.

"Two Slytherins at the entrance to the common room for you," the boy who'd woken him up replied.

"Thanks," Sirius said with a yawn. He threw on a robe and walked down the stairs to see what the fuss was about.

"Sirius," Bellatrix whimpered as she threw her arms around him.

"What's going on?"

"Her former fiancé sent her a love letter," Narcissa said dryly.

"What did it say?" Sirius asked intently.

"Words to the effect that he didn't intend to give up his claim and that he'd take Bella by force if that should prove necessary," Narcissa replied.

"Do you still have it?"

Bellatrix reached into her pocket and pulled out a crumpled piece of parchment.

"Thank you," Sirius muttered as he took possession.

"What are we gonna do, Sirius?" Bella asked in a frightened voice.

"You two are going to go up stairs and spend the night with Lily," Sirius replied. "I'm going to respond to this note." He watched until the two girls disappeared into the Headgirl's suite before setting off, he had work to do.

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Lily had an unreadable look on her face as her two guests settled down on the spare bed she'd had the elves bring up. She was not on speaking terms with either of the other girls and if it weren't for the fact that Sirius had requested it, she'd have never allowed them access to her suite of rooms.

"Thank you for letting us stay with you," Bellatrix said shyly. Sirius had told her to be polite and thank their host.

"Yes," Narcissa agreed distantly. "It was quite kind of you."

"Anything for Sirius," Lily said, uncomfortably.

"He's great, isn't he?" Bella agreed happily. "Right now he's making sure that my ex fiancé can't get me."

"Stupid oaf should have never threatened a daughter of House Black," Narcissa sniffed.

"Or done anything else that Sirius could take as provocation," Lily added.

"Sirius said that he'd have killed the Lestranges before he allowed either one to marry me," Bella continued. "I hope he doesn't get hurt," she added with a sigh.

"He will be fine," Narcissa assured her sister, a slight twitch around the eyes was the only thing that betrayed her true feelings. "He is, after all, a Black."

"Sirius will only get hurt if he isn't careful," Lily said confidently. "And then I'll patch him up, good as new."

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Sirius took a moment to admire his handiwork. The Lestrangle brothers were dead and the Ministry was unlikely to take an interest

in the affair thanks to the note the to Death Eaters had been stupid enough to send.

"Thought the Blacks weren't powerful enough to respond did you?" Sirius muttered. "Heh, or maybe you thought I'd ignore a chance to put two more of you bastards in the ground?"

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Lily sighed as Bellatrix held up yet another robe for inspection.

"Do you think Sirius would like me in these?" Bella asked, holding up a pair of midnight black robes.

"I'm sure he would," Narcissa agreed.

"Lily, do you think I should keep my hair long, or would Sirius like it short?" Bella asked.

"Sirius likes long hair," Lily replied with a grin.

"What about my skin?" Bellatrix asked. "Should I tan it?"

"I should keep it the way it is if I were you," Narcissa said calmly. "Now why don't you go wash up while Ms. Evans and I have a little talk."

"All right," Bellatrix agreed.

Narcissa waited till her sister had left the room before turning to speak with the future Mrs. Potter. "May I ask you to keep what you learn about Bellatrix to yourself?"

"Myself and the others," Lily said honestly. "I won't hide things from James and he won't hide things from the other three."

"That is acceptable," Narcissa said reluctantly. "Bellatrix is a very capable witch in public, when she is alone with those she feels close to she's . . ." Narcissa's mind worked to find the right word. "She has

a difficult time acting on her own and she feels the need to have someone to tell her what to do."

"I see."

"I don't think you do." Narcissa sighed. "Bellatrix constantly seeks the approval of someone. In the past it was our mother, then our aunt, and now she's fixated on Sirius."

"I thought it was just a crush?"

"It isn't necessarily romantic, though it will become so if Sirius wishes it to. It's simply the way Bellatrix is, do you understand."

"No," Lily said honestly. "But I think I'm starting to."

The two girls conversed along that line for several minutes before a sudden thought occurred to Narcissa.

"May we use your floo connection?" Narcissa asked intently.

"Sure," Lily agreed. "Go ahead."

"Thank you, Miss . . ."

"Lily," she interjected. "We're all friends here."

"Right." Narcissa gave the other girl a genuine smile, the first she'd had that night. "Thank you, Lily." She threw a handful of powder into the fire and whispered her address.

"What is it?" The harsh face of the Black Matriarch appeared in the flames.

"Aunty," Narcissa said respectfully. "There is something Bella and I wish to discuss with you."

"And?"

"Have you considered the fact that my sister's husband still lives?" Narcissa asked carefully.

"A fact I lament every day," the old woman said sourly. "What of it?"

"Think of what happened to Lucius," Narcissa prompted. "What's even now happening to the Lestranges. But Andromeda's husband still lives."

"What are you . . ." The old woman's face went slack. "I see. There is no need to bother the heir with questions about this, I shall find out myself."

"I was hoping that you would say that, Aunty," Narcissa replied. "Sirius has shown that he enjoys playing things close to his chest and I was worried that he would be annoyed if I questioned him."

"So much trouble would have been spared if he had just explained things to the family ahead of time," the old woman sighed. "Of course he couldn't do that, child was too Slytherin to be sorted into Slytherin and expects the rest of us to be able to keep up with him."

"As you say, aunty."

"Goodnight, Narcissa."

"Goodnight, Aunty."

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Amelia was proud of the fact that she managed to keep her breakfast down, her partner wasn't so lucky. Even after a year on the force, the crime scene was one of the worst she'd ever seen, more terrible than anything the Death Eaters had ever done before. There were two stiffs without their skins and the latest from forensics was that the poor bastards had been alive until the very end.

"Do we have an ID on the stiffs?" She asked the man St. Mungos had sent over.

"It's the Lestrangle brothers," the Healer replied confidently.

"Lestrangle?" Amelia frowned in confusion. "Our latest intel was that they were highly placed Death Eaters, why in the world would they do this to two of their own?"

"If they were Death Eaters then why in the hell didn't you arrest them?" The Healer growled.

"No evidence and no witnesses," Amelia said sourly. "You know it's a war and I know it's a war, but the higher ups need a bit more convincing."

"Bastards," the Healer barked. "And to answer your question, I'm not sure Death Eaters had anything to do with this one."

"How do you know?" Amelia demanded.

"Found this in the left one's mouth." The Healer held up a sheet of paper. "Fascinating reading."

It only took Amelia a couple seconds to finish the Note. "Black," her voice was neutral. Who'd have guessed that the cute little firsty she'd helped get to his first Transfigurations class would turn out like this?

"Got any evidence that he was behind this?" The Healer asked with a grin.

"Not a shred," Amelia replied cheerfully. "Which is why I'm not going to arrest him."

"Not like he'd get convicted anyway," the Healer commented. "Public wouldn't stand for it if the contents of that little note got around."

"I take it that I'm not the first one you showed this to?" Amelia asked dangerously.

"You are," the Healer said quickly. "I'd wager my assistant showed it to a fair number before turning it over to me though. Can't find

anyone that's willing to accompany me to your crime scenes that can keep their bloody mouths shut."

"What do you want to bet that the Black sisters will be two witches at Hogwarts that won't get bothered by lonely young wizards looking for dates?" Amelia laughed.

"No bet," the Healer said with a grin. "Not after what's happened to their previous suitors."

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Andromeda was just about to start making lunch when she was disturbed by a knock on the door. On the other side was a woman she'd never expected to see again, not after the words exchanged at their last meeting anyway.

"Andromeda," the old woman said calmly. "Are you going to invite me in?"

"Aunty?" Andromeda Tonks nee Black said in shock. "What are you doing here?"

"I see marrying down has made you forget your manners," the old woman observed. "Pity."

"What are you doing here?" Andy growled. She groped for her wand.

"I came to speak with you about your future with the family," the old woman replied. "If you are rude enough to keep me at the door then I suppose I have no choice but to have that conversation here."

"I thought you made it clear that I had no future with the family," Andromeda said bitterly.

"That was before your sisters pointed out the fact that Sirius has allowed your husband to live," the old woman explained.

"What?"



"You haven't heard?" The woman smiled widely. "Sirius killed Lucius Malfoy on the day he was supposed to wed Narcissa and it's rumored that both Lestrage brothers have met similar fates at the end of his wand. Sirius killed them all to protect the family's purity, yet your husband survives."

"Sirius doesn't believe that pureblood nonsense," Andromeda said hotly. "He even gave me away at the wedding."

"Yes I know," her aunt agreed. "Which is why I came here. To find out what he sees in your husband."

"Who's at the door, mummy?" A child's voice asked.

"Go back to your room," Andromeda ordered.

"What do we have here?" Her aunt muttered as she stooped down to examine the child.

"My name is Nymphadora," the young girl announced proudly.

"A wonderful name," the old woman replied. "I . . ." she watched in shock as the child's hair shifted through several colors before settling on pink. "I see," the old woman said with a satisfied smile.

"What do you see?" Andromeda demanded.

"I see that you and your husband produced a daughter with a powerful and rare gift," the old woman replied. "We are going to have a family dinner in two weeks time, bring young Nymphadora."

"Is my husband invited as well?" Andromeda asked cautiously.

"Of course," the old woman replied. "It's long past time for him to meet the rest of the family."

"So long as Sirius comes," Andromeda agreed.

"Where else would the heir be?" The old woman smiled. "But at the head of the table as a new Black is presented to the family."

Andromeda felt faint, either she'd taken a bad batch of potions or the day was shaping up to be the weirdest one she'd ever had. Either way, she was sure it was Sirius' fault.

The old woman smiled to herself. A metamorph of all things, it seemed that young Andromeda's impulsiveness had been a boon to the family after all.

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James stared at Sirius until the other boy began to sweat. It was a technique he'd picked up from their head of house.

"Why don't you tell me what you did wrong last night?" James suggested calmly.

"They gave me an excuse and I acted on it," Sirius said defensively.

"I see." James turned to the other Marauders. "Peter, why don't you enlighten our dimwitted friend."

"Use small words," Remus added with a grin.

"There were two of them and you went alone," Peter said slowly.

"Them?" Sirius laughed. "They were nothing special, could have taken them even before Flitwick's training."

"There are four of us," James said patiently. Lily didn't count, he was determined to keep his love out of the fighting. "Four of us and how many of them?"

"They only have to get lucky once, Sirius," Peter said softly. "Let's say they did get lucky, even if you did take them with you it would mean trading you for them."

"And you're worth a thousand of them," Remus agreed.

Lily walked in on the tale end of the conversation. "Not to mention how bloody selfish it is to keep all the bloody Death Eaters for yourself," she added. "This is just like in fifth year when you ate that entire pie."

"Fine," Sirius agreed with a laugh. "Next time I have an excuse to kill a couple Death Eaters, I'll let you guys join in."

"That's all we ask," James said in relief, happy that they'd seemed to get through to their stubborn friend.

"Your mum is on the floo," Lily announced. "Wants to talk with you."

"Alright," Sirius stepped out of the room, absently noting the familiar weight of a rat scurrying up his leg and settling in his pocket.

A plan began to form in Peter's mind as he listened in on Sirius' conversation, a plan that could lead to happiness for another of his friends if he played his cards right.

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Peter resisted the urge to tug at the collar of his best robes as he waited for a response to his knock.

"Who are you?" The matriarch of the Black family demanded, peering suspiciously through the doorway.

"Peter Pettigrew, ma'am," Peter said politely. "I'm a friend of Sirius' and well . . . I have some things I thought you might want to know."

"Does Sirius know you're here?"

"No ma'am," Peter said quickly. "And he'd be annoyed if he found out."

"Why are you here then?" She barked.

"Cause Sirius is bloody brilliant and sometimes forgets that the rest of us aren't," Peter said with a self depreciating grin.

"I'm listening."

"James Potter is going to Marry Lily Evans, muggle born Headgirl. Andromeda Black married Theodore Tonks, Muggleborn but the top of his class."

"Your point being," the woman's prompted. "I'm aware that Sirius values the purity of power and ability more then he does purity of blood, a way of thinking that I've recently come around to."

"I found some of Sirius' notes and took the liberty of copying them for you," Peter said nervously, handing them over.

She glanced over the document. "A werewolf?" The woman hissed.

"Sirius is wondering if the traits will breed true without passing on the curse," Peter said quickly.

"I see." The woman sighed. "Sometimes I have to wonder why Sirius can't just explain things ahead of time for once."

"Cause then people will stop underestimating him," Peter said with a grin. "Not that many do after what happened to Malfoy and the Lestranges."

"It could also be his sick sense of humor at work," the old woman added thoughtfully. "He inherited it from my grandfather."

AN: A galleon or two of polish provided by dogbertcarroll, title by Clell Harmon. Typos by William, .

Deleted Scene: Lily

Lily waited until she was sure that Sirius was well out of range before she turned towards the other two witches. "Sirius is a stupid immature overgrown child," Lily stated calmly. She resisted the urge to smile at the looks of outrage that appeared on the other two witches. "That being said, he's also my friend. If this is some trick you've cooked up

to hurt him, then I will find you and I will make you beg for death before I finally grant it."

Bellatrix smiled widely. "We're going to be such good friends," she said excitedly.

"Sirius saved us from a fate worse than death and he's also the future head of our family," Narcissa explained. "What would you do for the man that kept you from a wedding night with Lucius Malfoy?"

"I'm Lily," the future Mrs. Potter introduced herself. "And if you're going to hang around Sirius, then there are some things I think you should know." She smiled at the looks of attentiveness the two witches sported. She wasn't going to share anything sensitive of course, just enough to help them fit in.

AN: Typo busted by meteoricshipyards.

Omake by dogbertcarroll/Doghead Thirteen

Peter ducked and weaved as curses splattered the ground around them ducking down a side street with three death eater's fast on his heels. He dove forward and scurried beneath and out the other side of a cart that was in the way letting his far guide him.

It took the DEs a couple of seconds to remove the obstacle from their path and Peter waited impatiently for them, while trying to clam his racing heart and hold on to that small bit of courage that had earned him his place in Gryfindor, letting them catch up before he was off again drawing them down an alley.

They sneered at him smugly, realizing he'd lead them into a dead end alley. There was no escape, no witnesses, no hope.

Peter backed himself into a corner shivering and waited for them to get closer closing off any possible way he could run.

He had his back to the wall and there was no way out.

They'd fallen right into his trap.

There was no escape, no witnesses, no hope, for them.

He let the fear run wild and the rat free, barely holding on to any sense of self as he leapt forward half crouched over.

Tonight, three very unfortunate Death Eaters would find out how a cornered rat fights.

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Sirius took the three blood stained wands that Peter handed him.

"Well that's another three," he said, wondering why one of the wands looked like something had bitten it in half.

Nah. Wasn't worth wondering about. Peter had taken three more down, and that was all that mattered; who cared how, anyway?

Omake by ubereng

"You did what?"

"I told Snivellus how he could get into the shack tonight. That'll teach him to snoop after us and to rape girls while polyjuiced as me... I still can't believe he got away with what he did to Sarah Underhill... Damn headmaster."

"You idiot! If Remus kills him, he'll never forgive us or, worse, he'll be executed."

Remus stepped into the vacant classroom. "No, I don't mind killing him. We all know he's joining Voldemort at the first opportunity and, so far, only you two have got to kill any bad guys. But, James is right. If they even suspect that a werewolf killed anyone, then they'll execute me first and ask questions later. Shame I don't work with Voldemort, those werewolves attack with impunity."

"I got that covered," Sirius replied as he pulled out and unshrunk two items. "A gas-powered wood chipper and a bottle of Pepto-Bismol, in case Mooney eats some of the foul git... They'll never find the body."

"So we're all agreed. The 'Half Blood Prince' becomes the 'All Dead Ponce', tonight."

Backstory by faerakhasa

Peter walked briskedly through the ruined corridors of Malfoy Manor until he reached a mid-sized lab on a dungeon. He barely gave a glance to the broken treasures scattered on a corner -as this room had once been Lucius Malfoy's most secure vault, and thus the only room in the house to survive unscathed the siege- and stopped on the only niche still occupied and well cared for.

Most people might wonder why it was so, as the niche kept only two skulls and a misshapen figurine, but those people weren't Peter Pettigrew. He smiled sadly as he touched the small dent in James Potter's skull. Godric's Hollow had burned down the second year of the war, and the tombs of the Potters had been destroyed. It was only Peter's skill as a skulker after all the years and had managed to save the skull with only a minor break.

Remus was unluckier. A werewolf killed during a forced transformation never is a good sight. A twisted, misshapen parody of a skull, canine and human features mixed, showcased this.

And Sirius, of course. Poor Sirius would never have his skull here with his friends. Nothing ever returned from the Veil. A small figurine of a four legged animal -Sirius would call it a dog, but transfiguration had never been his best subject. It was made of a strangely beautiful substance, wood and obsidian twirling in hypnotic patterns. A transfiguration disaster, in truth, as they had been trying to turn wood into glass for that third year class when Sirius decided to get fancy and create a glass grim (even back then he had been obsessed with then- it was no surprise to discover his animagus). Sirius had kept it as a luck charm, and if Peter has once known how it has ended up on his trunk on seventh year he has long since forgotten.

Peter reached in his pocket and a fourth object joined in the niche. Another skull, this time a common rat skull. Today was the end, let the Marauders run together once again. He turned to face the bubbling gold cauldron. Peter was not heroic. He had never had that king of bravery. But he had never wanted to join the dark. A small moment of terror, and his entire life had collapsed. But he had been a Gryffindor, and he still was one of the best potion masters of the world. Snape? Please, as if Snivellus would have been able to create -from scratch- the potion than had resurrected the Dark Lord on the graveyard -of brewed three correct animagus potions in fourth year.

The potion had bubbled for seven moons, the potion slowly changing colors from the original silver to its current jet black. Peter picked the last ingredient, a bag of silvery sand, and breathed deeply. After the first battle of the Ministry, the time turners had been destroyed. It had taken years of patient search to gather enough time sand for his project, but he had managed to do it. He added the sand, and the potion turned a blinding white and started to produce blinking flashes of light. Seven seconds.

He had though long and hard and who to send. He was a coward, he knew that. He did not dare to destroy it all again. Let his last act of sacrifice pay for his crimes. Remus was the most intelligent of then all, but, on his own way was as much a coward as Peter. And Sirius? Sirius had not managed to act responsibly even on the life and death battle than had killed him. As usual, it would have to be James. He picked his skull and held it over the potion. Four seconds.

James had always been the linchpin. The force than got four completely different personalities and turned it into a perfectly oiled team. Granted, a pranking team, but those had been the happiest days of his life. One second.

Peter dropped the skull, and it fell on the potion in the perfect moment. A last explosion of light. Time unraveled as the world ended.

Unrelated Omake



Omake for Double Your Pleasure (Odd Ideas chapter 100) by The Wandering Soul of 1014

End of Fourth Year, on the Hogwarts Express;

Hermione had only just left the compartment she was sharing with Harry, Ron, and the Weasley Twins when Padma and Parvati cornered her and pushed her into another empty compartment.

"Hermione, could we have a word with you?" Parvati asked.

"Um . . . sure. Is there a problem?"

The twins shuffled around uncomfortably for a moment, wondering how to begin.

"Well you see, Hermione, you know how Harry and I are doing in our relationship, and I was hoping to talk with you about that altercation that you and Harry had right after the second challenge, and . . . "

Hermione blinked for a moment, and then her face took on a mixture of emotions: surprise, embarrassment, shame, and a slight amount of jealousy and longing.

"NO! I mean . . . Harry is my . . . and I would NEVER . . . "she stammered.

The Patils looked at each other for a second or two, processing a silent conversation like only twins could. Then Padma looked over at the bushy haired witch and said "We know you wouldn't do anything like that on your own, and we aren't accusing you of anything. Nor would we ever dream of trying to keep you away from Harry!"

Hermione calmed down after hearing that, "O-OK then. S-sorry . . . "

"However," Parvati hedged, "If you wanted to . . . and were willing to share . . . "

Hermione's eyes widened and she let out a confused "Huh?"

Padma sighed. "Monogamy is more of a muggle thing than it is a wizarding thing. You don't see it much anymore because the last two Dark Lords tended to kill a lot more women and female children than they did males."

"And well . . ." her sister continued, "if you wanted to, and were willing to help with a few things, we would be willing to . . . um, share him."

Hermione mimicked a fish out of water for a few minutes, and then, she ran another gamut of emotion. Finally, she said "I . . . to say that I wasn't hoping to get a chance to be with him would be a lie, but . . . but why are you doing this? I mean, he's the happiest he's ever been in . . . well, forever, and . . . I mean . . ."

Padma sighed, sat down, and then gestured Hermione to sit beside her. "You see, there are a couple of reasons why Parvati is asking you this. For one, we know better than to try and shut you out. Harry needs you like he needs air. He might love Parvati, but he'd turn around and drop everything to help you in an instant with whatever you need. We understand that, and while in other situations we could try to hook you up with someone else . . ."

"There isn't anyone who would match your standards, I mean, look at Ron!" Parvati wrinkled her nose.

Hermione nodded a nasty look on her own face.

"Two," Parvati hedged, "We kind of liked that forceful side of him that came out when he was carrying you out of the library." Hermione looked down and blushed a deep red.

"And third . . . well, we were hoping you'd help us explain something to Harry . . ."

Hermione nodded once, and then took on a rather thoughtful look. Suddenly, her eyes widened, and she looked between both sisters. "Wait a minute. All this time you were using pronouns like 'us', or 'we'. Does that mean . . ."

Padma shifted uneasily. "Ever since we were born, we have shared everything. Clothes, books, friends, you name it, we've shared it. And like I said before, there aren't that many boys that are as good as Harry is to us . . ."

"I mean, we have been swapping places ever since we first came to Hogwarts. For us to share a boyfriend isn't all that big a deal for us." Her sister continued.

"But Harry . . . we aren't quite sure how to explain it to him without making him freak out. You're his best friend, and you like him like we like him, to practically the same degree!"

Both witches pleaded with Hermione "Could you help us?"

Disclaimer: A typical marriage law fic. Remember who wrote this and that you have only yourself to blame for the mental images.

## The Marriage Goat

"Do this for me and I'll double my monthly donation," Lucius purred. "Understand?"

"I understand, Lucius," Fudge agreed eagerly.

"Then thank you for your time, Minister." Lucius managed to keep the look of contempt off his face until after he'd left the room.

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Dumbledore looked down at the information he'd just received. It seemed the Malfoy family had decided to make their move, and a masterful one at that. A frown appeared on the old man's face as he considered his next move, with a bit of planning . . . yes, yes the entire situation could be turned to his advantage. Now to tell young Harry, he had no doubts that the boy would be willing to play his part. It was for the greater good after all.

The wards chimed, informing him that Harry had arrived on schedule. Dumbledore put on a pleasant smile and did his best to look relaxed as Harry entered the room.

"You wanted to speak with me, sir?"

"Ah yes," Dumbledore agreed. "I thought I'd personally inform you of an opportunity that's fallen into our laps."

"What opportunity is that, sir?" Harry asked curiously.

"The Minister has forced through a new law pertaining to you," Dumbledore said, drawing things out.

"What's the law about?"

"The law states that the Potter family will provide a bride to the Malfoy family," Dumbledore said with a twinkle in his eye. "The Minister states that it is to help heal our world after the latest war." Who knew Voldemort's new body was allergic to pumpkin juice? Tom really should have checked before leading that attack on the bottling plant. "I agree and I also think that this provides us with an excellent opportunity to redeem young Draco, not to mention the chance it offers you to overhear and pass along valuable life saving information."

"You think it's an excellent opportunity?" Harry said faintly.

"I do indeed," Dumbledore agreed. "It also insures your safety from the darker elements of society if the betrothal contract is written correctly." The Headmaster intended to carry out the negotiations himself. "You need not worry that the contract will make you stand out, most political matches use a betrothal contract of some sort to set the terms of the wedding." Seeing that the boy was overcome with emotion to speak, Dumbledore decided end things there. "Take a bit of time to think about your new situation," he said cheerfully. "But don't take too long, the law states that the wedding must occur within the next two months."

He had no memory of the walk from the Headmaster's office, but Harry's face was ghostly white and his movements were stiff and robotic as he entered the Gryffindor Common Room.

"What'd Dumbledore want, mate?" Ron asked.

"He wants me to turn into a girl and marry Malfoy," Harry replied, shock coloring his voice.

"What?" Ron stared at his friend oddly. "If this is a joke, then it's not funny."

"Why does the Headmaster want you to do something like that?" Hermione demanded. How utterly barbaric, she respected authority but there were limits to what she was willing to accept.

"Malfoy's dad paid off the Minister to make some sort of law. Dumbledore says that it's a chance to change Malfoy for the better and that it'll also give me a chance to pass on any information that I might overhear."

"That old son of a bitch, just who does he think he is playing with people like that?" Hermione growled.

"He assured me that this will also guarantee my safety," Harry added. "As the marriage contract will have some dire penalties."

"That rotten old son of a whore guarantees your safety does he? Well . . ." A look of confusion appeared on Hermione's face. "What do you mean, marriage contract?"

"Dumbledore says they're common in political matches," Harry explained. The fog was clearing and he was starting to think clearly. He'd toss on his invisibility cloak and then he'd go through one of the passages to Hogsmead. A couple bus rides then he'd sneak across the channel to France and lose himself in the Muggle world.

"Harry," Hermione smiled sweetly. "I think I might have a solution."

The next few weeks were a revelation to the girl. She'd always planned to go into research but now she was starting to give serious thought to a career in law, with it she could use her superior knowledge to push people around and ruin lives. The very thought alone was enough to cause shivers to run through her body.

"Here it is, Harry." Hermione sighed as she passed over the first draft of the contract. "And here's a list of suggested talking points."

"Thanks, Hermione," Harry said gratefully. "I can't wait to see the look on Malfoy's face when he realizes you outsmarted him like this."

Another shudder racked Hermione's body at that pronouncement. "No problem, Harry."

"I'll just go tell Dumbledore that he won't be handling the contract, shall I?"

As expected, the old man wasn't pleased to learn that he'd miss the opportunity to show off his skills.

"What?" Dumbledore asked dully.

"I'm going to be handling the betrothal contract myself," Harry repeated.

"This isn't the sort of thing to be left to beginners," Dumbledore said gently, hiding his annoyance at the boy's presumption. "So I think it's best that . . ."

"Are you the head of the Potter family?" Harry interrupted.

"No," Dumbledore admitted.

"The talks are between the Malfoy family and the Potter family, aren't they?"

"They are, but . . ."

"You're not the head of the Malfoy family either, are you?"

"I'm not, still . . ."

"Then I don't believe I'll need your help," Harry said firmly. "Thank you for the offer though." Before the old man could reply, Harry brushed past him and into the meeting room.

"Potter," Lucius said with a silky smile.

"Lucy," Harry said with a nod. He tossed the draft in front of the man. "Take a look."

"What's this?" Lucius demanded.

"The contract I'm insisting upon," Harry replied calmly.

Lucius glared at the boy. "Think you can use the law to find a way out of this?"

"Just read it," Harry replied.

"Potter family will supply a bride, marriage will be publicly consummated with pictures to appear on the front page of the Daily Prophet, the Quibbler, and to be made into posters that will be posted in Diagon Alley and several public areas?" A grin appeared on Lucius' face. "Think Draco can't perform in front of an audience?"

"Something like that," Harry agreed. "Full page ads with pictures will also appear at least twice a month in the Quibbler with that months performance."

"No spells or charms to be used on the bride?" Lucius growled.

"Not after the marriage," Harry agreed. "Though the contract does stipulate that the bride will be female when delivered."

"Forfeiture of the Malfoy fortune and the life of Lucius Malfoy if any harm befalls the bride?" Lucius growled. "Servitude of Narcissa Malfoy and Draco Malfoy to be handed to the head of the designated head of the Potter family to do with as he sees fit?" The last bit wouldn't be so bad as his son would become the head of the Potter family after the marriage, and without the head of the family demanding it there was a good chance that they'd be able to successfully dispute the forfeitures then there was a good chance that they could be ignored. If not, well he had a lovely manor house in the south of France that he'd been meaning to spend more time in. "Add that this clause will not be carried out unless requested by the head of the Potter family."

"Done, but I'm going to want something in return. Say, half the Malfoy fortune."

"To be turned over to the head of the Potter family on the day of the wedding," Lucius retorted.



"Fine but you will all agree to submit to the fitting of a magical items that will ensure the contract is carried out," Harry pointed out. "The magical items will be controlled by the head of the Potter family."

"If the bride does not become pregnant within six months, then she will be changed back to male and Draco will be turned into a suitable female. Neither Draco or the bride will charmed or transfigured in any way nor will any potions be used on them.

"Also mentions that any offspring will be the heirs to the Malfoy name and fortune," Harry pointed out helpfully. "And that all expenses for the wedding will be provided by the Malfoy family. The wedding and the notifications will be handled by the Potter family."

A cold smile appeared on Lucius' face. While not quite what he'd intended to offer, the contract the boy had given him was better than he'd hoped to get from the old fool.

"I'll have my lawyers send over your copy later," Harry said as he left the room. "Later, Lucy."

It wasn't easy, but Lucius managed to resist the urge to laugh maniacally.

IIIIIIII

Harry grinned as he slid next to the twins.

"How would you two like to be wedding planners?" Harry asked happily.

"What?" George asked dully.

"I want you to plan the wedding that will join the Malfoys to the Potters," Harry explained. "Interested?"

"Huh?" Fred stared at Harry like he'd grown another head.

"Just say yes," Harry advised. "And charge through the nose, at least ten times the going rate and a hundred would be better."

"Erg?" The twins shared a look.

"It's for a prank," Harry explained.

"Oh . . ."

". . . why didn't you say so, Harry?"

"We'd be happy to help."

"Great," Harry said cheerfully. Idly wondering if Remus would be willing to get ordained, Harry wandered off in search of his bushy haired friend. They had some transfiguration to do.

|||||

Lucius laughed as he went over the receipts. The cost of the wedding was enormous and it was plainly obvious that Potter was using the wedding to line his own pockets, wouldn't the boy be surprised when he learned that Draco, as the new head of the Potter family, controlled the accounts. The look on the boy . . . girl's face would be priceless.

|||||

Draco squirmed in his uncomfortable formal robes. This was his day, the day that he would triumph over Potter and insure that the Malfoy family would remain at the apex of the political ladder. He strode proudly to his place at the head of the chapel and was shocked to find Potter already seated in the front row.

"Enjoying your last few minutes of being a male, Potter?" Draco laughed cruelly. He was a bit confused by the way everyone on the bride's side seemed to ignore his taunt, only the tightening of their jaw muscles evidenced the fact that his shot had hit home.

"What are you talking about?" Harry asked, apparently confused by the question. "Why wouldn't I be a man in a few minutes?"

"Because you are going to be my bride," Draco replied.

"Whatever gave you that idea?" Harry asked. "The law stated that the Potter family had to provide a bride for the Malfoy family. Nothing in it said that I had to marry you."

"You're the only Potter, fool."

"Now that isn't entirely correct," Harry said with a wide grin. "Hermione?" The muggleborn girl came out holding a cloth covered cage.

"You made Granger a Potter?" Draco asked sickly. He was going to have to marry a mudblood?

"Maybe later," Harry said, not noticing the girl's sudden blush. "No, Hermione is carrying the newest member of my family."

Hermione whipped off the cloth cover to reveal a porcupine, a large angry porcupine.

"Draco, meet your betrothed, Squicky the Goat."

"She doesn't look a like a goat to me, Harry," Ron called out.

"That's because we transfigured her into a porcupine before we turned her female," Harry explained. "She'll be a goat again and a he if Draco fails to impregnate her."

AN: That's how you do a wedding law/betrothal contract fic. Well, short of murdering everyone of course. Returned to my roots on this one, see Odd Ideas chapter 1 for details. Typos by ubereng, Clell Harmon.

Omake: Oh, Fudge

"How good of you to take the time to meet with me, Minister," Harry said as he swept into the man's office.

"Potter?" Fudge squeaked. "How'd you get past my secretary?"

"Promised her an autograph," Harry replied as he sat down and propped his feet on the Minister's desk. "I'm sure you heard about the wedding?"

"I did what I thought was necessary to keep the peace," Fudge simpered.

"And the large bribe Lucius gave you had nothing to do with it," Harry agreed. "I just came by to point a few things out."

"What are those?" Fudge asked sourly.

"Lucius was giving you five thousand galleons a month to do what he said," Harry said calmly. "I'm afraid he won't be able to afford that any longer, not after losing four fifths of the Malfoy fortune."

"I see." Fudge forced himself to relax, he saw where things were going.

"I, on the other hand, don't want you to do what I tell you to do. I simply wish to be left alone," Harry's grin sharpened. "And I believe I can do that for a one time payment of seven thousand galleons."

Fudge smiled. "I really think that continuing Lucius' donation schedule would be more beneficial," he said smoothly. "While seven thousand sounds like a lot of money, I think you'll find that it will run out rather quickly."

"I think you misunderstand," Harry said calmly. "The payment wouldn't be to you."

"Then . . ."

"There are a number of dangerous individuals in the world," Harry explained. "And I've been assured that three thousand galleons is enough to hire any number of them for a little job, seven would insure that I could hire the best. Then we'd see if the new Minister would be more reasonable than you are."

Fudge choked. "You're threatening to kill me?" He asked incredulously. That wasn't how the game was played.

"I'm telling you that all I want you to do is leave me alone," Harry corrected.

"Fine," Fudge agreed. "I'll leave you alone."

"Wonderful," Harry said cheerfully. "That's one item off the agenda, now on to the next."

"The next?" Fudge echoed.

"What you need to do to get me to leave you alone," Harry explained.

Omake by Stick97

Draco had done his best to impregnate his "wife" in the time frame allotted. His father had made it quite clear what would happen to the proud Malfoy name if he had been unable to perform. He had managed to consummate the marriage, painfully, but he had done his duty.

Thankfully, he had been able to avoid any scarring thanks to a considerate wedding gift of essence of Murtlap.

But unfortunately, Draco's time was now up. He was standing in the lobby of the ministry, hoping his father could pull something out of his bag of tricks. His mother was standing beside him, trying to encourage him. For some reason, she had been trying to convince him to just cast a transfiguration charm on his wife ever since she had received an owl from the mudblood. Why the mudblood had sent his mother a howler was beyond him. He had not heard the whole thing, but everyone in the manor had heard the last part, where the mudblood had seemed to be screaming in tongues. After the howler exploded, his mother had come out of her boudoir wearing a spectacular blush. There must have been some sort of chilling charm on the howler as well, as his mother always seemed to be shivering whenever Draco or his wife were around.

After the third time his mother had tried to cast a charm on his wife, his father had locked his mother's wand away.

Suddenly there was a commotion by the inbound floo. Potter and the mudblood came tumbling out of the floo. Stupid Potter! He can't even come out of a floo like a proper pureblood! Idiot scarhead ended up with his head under the mudblood's skirt. What an embarrassment!

Was his mother growling?

After a loud meep! from the mudblood, they had managed to regain at least a modicum of respectability. Once they were both standing, Potter casually strolled over in his direction, while his mother had grabbed the mudblood and dragged her over to the nearest corner. Why she was wasting her time on the know it all was beyond Draco. She was hopeless, but his mother had always been a mystery. Odd how they were both blushing spectacularly now. Why was her mother shaking her head no so furiously? The bookworm had taken out her wand and was holding it horizontally between her palms.

"Draco! Are you listening to me? How did the essence of murtlap work for you?" asked a smirking Potter.

"That was you Scarhead? Why would you do that?" asked a befuddled Draco.

"Well, I wouldn't want you to miss any of your honeymoon after all. Wouldn't want to default on that contract would we?" laughed Harry.

"When my father hears of this, he'll!" screamed Draco, drawing his wand and pointing it at Harry.

"Wonder why you are wasting your time posturing with that fool boy when you only have an hour to fulfill that blasted contract!" shouted a rapidly purpling Lucius Malfoy. Lucius reached out, snatching his son's wand and throwing it over his shoulder. He then took the leash on Draco's wife and grabbed Malfoy by the front of his robes, and proceeded to drag them both to the nearest broom closet. He then threw open the door, and tried to shove them both in the closet.

Unfortunately for the last pale hope of the Malfoy line, Narcissa chose that moment to decide both her future and that of the Malfoy Line.

"Finite Incantum!" hissed Narcissa casting the spell using her son's own wand.

As the spell struck, the porcupine wearing a green and silver bow to coordinate with its silver and emerald encrusted collar rose into the air and began to spin. Its spines began to whiten and shrink, while horns sprouted from its head.

Lucius had spun and dropped both his cane and the wand as he looked at his wife in shock. "Wha...wha...what have you done Narcissa?!? You callous bitch! I'll see your name struck from the Malfoy Family Tree you miserable excuse for a witch! I'll..."

"Hem-Hem! Actually, I, Harry Potter-Black, as the Head of the Black Family, formally annul your marriage and bring Narcissa back into the Black Family. So mote it be!" said Potter as a flash signified the change in Narcissa's status.

"Potter! You Ba-a-aaaa-aaastard!" screamed Draco as he covered his mouth with his hooves.

Disclaimer: One idea 'borrowed' from 'The Midnight Express.' (Movie not book)

## The Great Escape

Bundled in thick wool to ward against the cold, one of Azkaban's few human guards pushed the slop bucket down the hall, delivering meals to the minimum security block's prisoners.

"Lunch time," the guard called out cheerfully. He opened a small slat in the cell door and readied a large helping of gruel. "Means I need your bowl, Potter." He fingered the chocolate frog in his pocket, it wasn't much but it would give the boy some relief from the dementors. "Potter, answer me if you can." Ignoring regulations, he opened the door to check on the prisoner, it was just a boy after all, a boy who never should have been incarcerated in the first place. "God no," he swore. Harry Potter was hanging from one of the pipes from a rope made of torn bed sheets. "MEDIC," he screamed. The guard rushed to the boy and frantically tried to lift up on his legs to get the pressure off his neck. "I NEED A MEDIC NOW," he yelled as loudly as he could.

It didn't take long for help to arrive, but by then it was too late. Harry Potter was dead.

IIIIIIIIII

It all started in the summer before Harry's third year during his short stay in Diagon Alley when a flash of something odd in a shop window caught Harry's attention. Entering the store to get a closer look did little to satisfy his curiosity and in the end, he was forced to ask the shopkeeper what it was.

"What's this?" Harry asked, waving at the odd box in the display.

"Muggle world survival kit," the shop keeper explained. "Has everything a wizard needs to survive among the muggles for a few days."

"What's in it?"



In response, the shopkeeper opened up the box to reveal several smaller boxes. "First we have identification, muggles don't go anywhere without it and it'll self transfigure into whatever you need it to be. Next we have one thousand pounds, one thousand dollars, and twenty five Sovereigns in the deluxe model. On the other half we have a key chain, supposed to be able to open any muggle lock. An English, muggle phrase book, and a guide to life in the muggle world."

"Wow," Harry said, more than a bit impressed. "How much is it?"

"Ten Galleons for the standard model, twenty five for the deluxe," the shopkeeper replied. "Overstocked 'em during the last war, means I can let them go for a steal. Deal like that you won't find too often and if you buy the deluxe and I'll throw in two dozen blank maps."

"What's a blank map?" Harry asked, fascinated by what he was hearing.

"Silk handkerchiefs, hold one and concentrate on what you need a map of and it'll print itself." The shopkeeper smiled, misinterpreting the confused look on the boy's face. "Wondering how they got around the fact that it's almost impossible to do any magic on silk?"

"Um." He made a mental note to ask Hermione later. "Yeah."

"They enchanted the dye, not the silk." The man leaned back. "So, do you want one? Always useful to be prepared for an emergency."

"Yeah," Harry agreed. Anything that might give him an edge if he had to escape Sirius Black and that was leaving aside the fact that the money in the kit was worth more than price.

"Standard or deluxe?"

"Two deluxe, please," he replied.

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The warden had a look of horror on his face as he joined the rapidly growing circle around the body of their most famous prisoner.

"Were there any indications that he was going to commit suicide?" He asked reluctantly, news of this was going to create a shit storm of epic proportions.

"Suicide hell," the Sergeant of the guard snorted, "look at his wrists." An indrawn breath told him that they'd spotted it. "What kind of prisoner ties his arms behind his back before he tops himself?"

"For that matter," one of the guards said sickly. "What kind removes the ropes from his wrists afterwards?"

Azkaban's Healer cast a couple of diagnostic charms. "Looks like someone softened him up before hand." He reached down and turned over the boy's hand, revealing bruised knuckles. "Didn't go without a fight."

"Get the Director here now," the warden ordered. "The island is locked down until she gets here. No one leaves and no communication."

IIIIIIII

As the chocolate in his mouth dissolved, Harry made a mental note to add the substance to his rapidly expanding emergency kit. He took another bite, better make that a lot of chocolate.

IIIIIIII

Amelia ignored the sounds of the rookie Auror vomiting as she stooped down to examine the crime scene.

"Poor boy never should have been here in the first place," she sighed. "Dumbledore and his bloody games." She straightened out. "Well?"

"Faint portkey traces on the shoreline outside the wards," one of her underlings replied. "Having trouble with a trace."

"Why?"

"Looks like whoever it was tried to obscure the trail by activating dozens of portkeys at the same time," the man reported. "We're still trying to work out the tangle."

"I want to know as soon as you find something." She turned to the warden. "How in the hell did you let this happen?"

"Shouldn't be possible," he replied. "Not without inside help."

"And that means you and the entire guard force needs to be investigated," Amelia grumbled. "Wonderful."

|||||||

Harry reached into his pocket for his emergency kit, intent on giving it to his godfather knowing how valuable it could be to a man on the run and came up with nothing. It was sitting in his trunk. Harry learned a valuable lesson that night, the best survival kit in the world is useless unless you have it when you need it.

Another thought rocked the boy's world as his godfather made his escape, if Sirius Black, his godfather could be thrown into Azkaban without a trial then it could happen to anyone. He needed to find out everything he could about the prison and he needed to make plans on how to escape.

As it happened, Azkaban was almost pathetically easy to get information on since the Ministry was happy to send anyone that asked free copies of the blueprints along with a map of the island. Hermione was right, Wizards really did have no common sense, assuming everything they'd sent him was accurate of course.

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Amelia frowned as she considered the information she'd been given. They'd finally managed to trace most of the portkeys. Two locations seemed to stand out, Hogwarts and the Malfoy ancestral home. It'd be nice to have a bit more information before launching a raid and

showing her hand, but she'd worked with less in the past. She put out the alert to get the tactical team together, this wasn't the time to take any chances.

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Harry wasn't feeling so great. His godfather was on the run, he'd been entered into the Triwizard tournament, and it was a massive pain in the ass it was to carry his emergency kit every day. Speaking of that damned kit, he was currently in Hogsmeade searching for more items that would help him get out of trouble in the future.

"What are these?" Harry asked.

"High security locks," the locksmith replied. "Same as they use in Gringotts and Azkaban. Cold forged iron so they're unaffected by magic."

"Magic doesn't affect iron?" Harry asked curiously.

"Steel is tough to enchant, Iron is almost impossible. No magic will get through these, least none ever has in the past."

"What do you do if you loose a key?" Harry asked.

"If you do, then you come to me and I use a set of these." He pulled a ring of keys out of his pocket. "These will open almost any lock used in England." The magical section anyway.

"Could . . . could I get a set?" Harry asked nervously.

"What do ya want skeleton keys for?" The Locksmith asked suspiciously.

"For the triwizard," Harry explained. "If they're going to force me into it then I'm going to do my best to win."

"Guess it wouldn't hurt then," the man agreed. "Need anything else?"

Harry had a sudden flash of inspiration. "Would magic be able to detect anything in a box made out of iron?"

"Shouldn't be able to, why?"

"Could I get a couple small ones made?" Might as well use the space in the toes of his oversized shoes.

"Got a few things you don't want the Professors to find, eh?" The Locksmith laughed. "I was the same way when I was in Hogwarts. We'll keep this between us then, 'eh."

"Thank you, sir."

|||||||

Amelia watched with a satisfied smile as the tactical team breached the wards around Malfoy Manor and stormed the house, emerging a few minutes later with the restrained and enraged Lucius Malfoy.

"You'll pay for this, Bones," he bellowed. "I'll see you broken for this."

"I have no doubt that the Minister will rush to your aid as soon as he finds out you've been arrested," Amelia agreed calmly. "One of the many reasons we're keeping this quiet." She caught a flash of shock on the man's face just before her men slid a sack over his head. "Search the whole bloody place, I don't want a stone left unturned."

|||||||

Useless, nothing he'd had with him had been of any use during the confrontation with Voldemort. Worse, he hadn't even remembered he was carrying any of it with him. Something I can use to defend myself if I don't have my wand, he thought to himself, and something I can use to run away. Seemed he needed to make another trip to Hogsmead before he got on the express.

|||||||

Amelia felt sick as she looked over the report of Lucius Malfoy's interrogation. The man had spilled everything, names, account numbers, and a laundry list of crimes. Chief among which was the aid he'd given to his good friend Severus in finding a receptive guard at Azkaban.

"I want Snape and Auror Hays in irons right now," she growled to her underlings.

"Snape wasn't at Hogwarts and Dumbledore won't say a word," her assistant reported nervously. "Hays seems to have dropped off the planet."

"Did I ask for excuses?" Amelia said sweetly. "Or did I ask for results?"

"Right away, Madame Bones."

IIIIIIIIII

Harry took a deep calming breath before he walked up to the gaggle of Gryffindor girls that generally occupied the section of the Common Room directly opposite the fireplace.

"Uh . . . could one of you help me with something?" He asked nervously.

A torrent of giggles erupted from the girls. "What is it, Harry?" Lavender asked.

"Could one of you show me how to braid things?" He requested, sounding a touch more confident.

"Thinking of growing your hair out?" Another torrent of giggles erupted.

Harry held up roll of silk cord. "I was hoping to turn this into a belt," he explained.

Lavender drew her wand and sharply flicked it at Harry's hand. The boy watched in amazement as it unrolled itself. "Got a buckle?" The girl asked.

"Yeah," Harry agreed, pulling his newly made iron buckle out of his pocket.

The twisting cord wrapped around the buckle and wove into a belt. "Anything else?" Lavender asked.

"No, thank you for your help, Lavender."

"Happy to give it, Harry."

IIIIIIIIII

Amelia frowned when someone opened the door to her office without knocking. Her frown deepened when she saw just who had decided to barge in.

"What the hell do you want?"

The Headmaster smiled. "I'm told you're looking for Severus and I thought that I'd drop by to clear up any misunderstandings."

"I am and I presume that you're the one that's hiding him from me?"

"I thought the deal I had with the Minister cleared up any lingering problems from Severus' misfortunate youth."

"Your deal with the Minister disgusted me," Amelia said flatly. "Still does for that matter, but that's not why I want the bastard."

"What, then?"

"Severus Snape is wanted for questioning regarding his role in the Murder of Harry James Potter," Amelia said flatly.

The old man's eyes bulged and his lungs emptied. "What?" Dumbledore asked sickly, looking like he'd just been kicked in the stomach.

"You heard me," Amelia growled. "And if I can prove that you're the one hiding him then I'll do everything in my power to see that you're kissed right after he is. Failing that I'll see that you spend the rest of your days rotting in Azkaban where you belong."

|||||||

Harry's spirits lifted when Dumbledore rushed into the court room. He knew that he wasn't going to need any of it, not the kits hidden in the toes in his boots or the dagger under his lapel, not the plans he'd made with Sirius, or the trunks he'd taken the time to cache. The Headmaster had arrived and everything was going to be alright.

"I propose a recess," Fudge said loudly. He looked down and caught the Headmaster eye, they had a deal to make.

|||||||

Dumbledore didn't say a word as the members of the Order filed into the room one by one. It hadn't been easy to get them to agree to come, but he wanted everyone to see this, to see his first step in making amends for his greatest folly.

"What's this meeting about?" Minerva asked coldly, after everyone had taken their seats.

"Bones told me what you did, Severus," Dumbledore said softly, ignoring the question. Snape's eyes widened in fear as he clawed for his wand, it wasn't half way out before Dumbledore's curse blasted him across the room. "Nymphadora," Dumbledore barked. "Please, take him to Madame Bones with my compliments and tell her that I shall be there to turn myself in shortly."

|||||||



An Auror holding each arm, Harry marched numbly down the corridor towards his new cell wondering where everything had gone wrong. Dumbledore had arrived to save the day but after his meeting with the Minister, the Headmaster wouldn't even meet Harry's eyes. The boy's entire world collapsed when the Minister had announced that a deal had been reached. Solitary confinement in Azkaban at the Queen's pleasure, minimum security away from the Dementors in light of the boy's age.

"We're here," the guard on the left said as they unlocked the cell door. "Try to keep your spirits up, kid."

"I'm sure you won't be here long," the other guard agreed, pressing a piece of chocolate into the boy's hand. "Dementors don't come down here so it shouldn't be too bad."

"Just try to keep your spirits up," the first guard advised again as the cell door slid shut.

Harry collapsed on his bed and buried his face in his hands. How had everything come to this?

IIIIIIII

Dumbledore allowed his gaze to sweep over the Order as he readied himself for the likely reaction to the news he was about to drop.

"I'm afraid that I wasn't successful," Dumbledore said gravely. "Harry has been sent to Azkaban."

"No," Molly moaned.

"All is not lost," Dumbledore said, his voice gaining a bit of warmth. "I've managed to get the Minister to agree to keep him in Minimum security and to grant a pardon on the first day of school in exchange for my promise to be silent in public regarding the return of Voldemort."

"Tell them the rest of it," Tonks demanded.

"I'm not sure what you mean, Nymphadora," Dumbledore said kindly.

"Tell them how you sold Harry out to protect Snape," Tonks growled.

"I'm not . . ." A look of shock appeared on the old man's face. "How did you find out?"

"I'm a bloody Auror," Tonks said. "It's my job to find out."

"You sent my godson to Azkaban to protect your pet Death Eater," Sirius roared.

"Harry will be out and back at Hogwarts in a couple weeks," Dumbledore said calmly. "And the deal I worked with the Minister ensures that he will stay in a private cell in the the Minimum security wing, away from the Dementors."

"Albus, how could you," Molly gasped.

"I did what I thought best," the Headmaster replied, ignoring the looks of horror that had appeared on most of the Order's faces. "One must learn to look at the big picture."

Snape frowned, a private cell in the minimum security section? He'd have to see if he couldn't get a few old friends to ensure that the boy got the full Azkaban experience.

IIIIIIIIII

Amelia looked over the report she'd gotten from the interrogation of Severus Snape with a look of disgust on her face.

"What's this?" She demanded.

"The man's a potions master," her assistant said smoothly.

"I want everything he knows and I want it now," Amelia growled.

"I want your office and an easy life with no responsibilities," her assistant retorted.

|||||

Harry looked up when the cell door banged open and he shivered at the look on the guard's face, the man looked just like his uncle Vernon.

"Got a message for you," the guard said cheerfully.

"What?" Harry asked nervously.

"Severus Snape says hello." The man punctuated his statement with a punch to the jaw and another to the nose. Every guard checked their wand at the beginning of their shift and the wards ensured that they they didn't bring a spare, meant he had to do things the hard way. He didn't mind. "Yoof," he gasped.

Harry drew back his leg and gave the guard another kick in the groin. Wizards, he thought in disgust as the man fell to the ground. Take away their magic and they were useless. He gave the man several more boots to the ribs followed by a couple to the head to put the man out.

Harry looked down at the guard with a frown. This certainly complicated things, he thought to himself. On the other hand, a cold smile formed on his face, he did have a couple doses of Polyjuice and with them it wouldn't be too hard to turn the situation to his advantage.

|||||

Nymphadora Tonks walked calmly past the guards and into the holding area. As a rookie Auror, she was forbidden from entering without being accompanied by her training officer and the guards should have stopped her. They hadn't for one simple reason, she was moving with a purpose and she looked like she belonged. She hadn't even bothered to change her appearance.

As she walked down the hall, her right hand slipped into her pocket and donned a pair of brass knuckles. Honor needed to be satisfied.

|||||

'Auror Hays' didn't say a word as he stepped onto the ferry and the expression on his face didn't change as the boat pulled away from the shore. This was the sticky part, he thought to himself. If I can get through the next few minutes then I've got a chance to pull this off.

|||||

Amelia looked up at the polite knock on the door which opened a few minutes later to show the face of her assistant.

"Snape talk?"

"Dumbledore's here," her assistant said. "Said he wanted to give himself up."

"I'll deal with this myself." She got up from her desk and walked into the bull room to find the supposed greatest wizard of the age sitting placidly on one of the spare chairs.

Dumbledore rose when he noticed her. "I won't cause any trouble and I'll tell you anything you wish to know."

"Come with me," she sighed. Didn't look like she was going to be able to charge the old bastard with anything after all. Several Aurors took up positions to cover their boss as she led the old wizard towards the holding area.

|||||

'Auror Hays' sagged with relief when he saw that his cache was exactly where he'd left it. He stripped off the uniform and quickly got dressed. With one last look around to make sure he wasn't being observed, he activated his portkeys and disappeared.

|||||

Their ears were immediately assaulted by the sounds of pained screams when they opened the door to the holding area.

"See what that is," Amelia ordered. The Aurors hesitated, not wanting to leave their boss alone with the prisoner. "Now," she barked. "Wait here," she growled at Dumbledore.

"Of course," the old wizard agreed.

"Aurors, to me," Amelia bellowed down the hall. She entered the holding area and cautiously moved towards the sounds of commotion. She wasn't surprised by what she found. In hindsight, she thought to herself, I really should have expected something like this to happen.

"Let me kill the bastard," Tonks screamed. There were three burly Aurors straining to hold her down. "He deserves it for what he did to Harry."

Another two stood watch over the bloodied form of Severus Snape.

|||||||

Sirius was sitting at a bar in Surrey fighting hard to resist the urge to take another look at the clock. This was the third night he'd started his vigil and the fifth location he'd chosen to keep watch over the park that Harry said he'd go to. He glanced up at the clock again. It was only the promise he'd made to his godson that prevented him from rushing out to do something stupid. Only the fact that he'd failed the boy in the past that gave him the determination to succeed this time.

There, Sirius' eyes widened in shock. A slow smile formed on his face, looked like the boy had pulled it off after all and it looked like they were off to start a new life somewhere that didn't have extradition treaties.

AN: Thanks go to Ed Beccerra, Chris Hill, chochoko83, Alex, and Brad Coleman, and everyone else I might of missed for their aid in designing the Escape kit. Typos busted by Ubereng, Tommy King , rhianona, and laros\_deejay. More thanks goes to Troy Guffey

## Mini Omake

Tonks didn't say a word as the Director of Magical Law Enforcement berated her until the woman paused to take a breath.

"I'll plead guilty to anything, go to Azkaban, get the kiss, whatever." Tonks gave a disinterested shrug. "I just have one condition, I want you to let me have the same cell as Snape."

## Mini-omake by Troy Guffey

Harry pulled out the kit, and opened it up.

He was extremely confused, those were not the items he had packed!

The first item appeared to be a miniature picnic basket. He accidentally tapped it a couple of times, and it suddenly grew to a full-sized version. He opened the lid. A tin of something called caviar, a sealed package of muggle crackers, strawberries? A bottle of champagne, and two champagne glasses.. A large blanket. Bottle of chocolate syrup, and a carton of ice cream, but oddly, no bowls.

There was a magical music box with half a dozen records by someone named "Barry White".

A miniature bed, which he carefully avoided tapping. A miniature shiny ball with mirror fragments all over it. A reel of strong silk ribbon.

Then he realized. This was \*Sirius's\* kit! They must have accidentally swapped.

The final two items REALLY confused him: What were "Trojans" and "Astroglide"?

Omake for "Odd Ideas", chapter 100 by nachoman1\_mx

"So, how did it go, Parvati?"

"We go all the way! In three hours, in the DA room!"

"Good! The Monojuice potion's ready too: just needs our hairs and we are good to go!"

"Great!" Parvati replied, as they both pulled a hair from their own heads and added them to the noxious-smelling cauldron. Then they watched how the potion shifted from a purplish tar into something that looked like milk chocolate and smelled of spices. "So, it's good for 12 hours, right?"

"Right." Padma said, as she spooned the potion into a box-full of single-dose phials and her sister corked them. "We can spend all night with him, then take another dose before going to sleep so we last enough to find a nice way of waking him up, and separate in time for lunch on Sunday."

"So, you do the honors, Pad?" Parvati asked, corking the last phial and closing the box. The cauldron still had a full dose. "You came up with the potion and almost made it by yourself."

"Next time, sis: Harry's technically your boyfriend."

"If you so insist." Parvati said, bringing the spoon to her lips and drinking. She then gripped the spoon before swallowing, swallowed, and watched how her sister seemed to disappear. Then she felt a full body crash and felt, for no better expression, full to the brim. She gripped the table, not sure on her feet.

"Okay in here? How it felt?" She whispered, feeling unable to take but shallow breaths.

"I'm okay." Her own mouth croaked out. "Felt like side-along apparition with Mum, but I still feel compressed."

"And I feel like I'm about to burst. Ready for the stretches, like the book said?"

"Right."

They did a few stretches until they felt a sudden full body jolt, and suddenly Parvati didn't feel this weird fullness anymore. Felt much

lighter too, and began hopping around the room. Out of her command, her arms began pumping up in turn with the jumps, her legs began to make a real effort, and soon they were hopping higher than the tables. Then she added her efforts to Padma's, and they were grazing the roof without sweating for it. Then, as they wound down, Padma began to give a commentary.

"Our added strengths, stamina and magical power, at no loss of speed or flexibility. We should also have a higher pain threshold and be somewhat spell-resistant."

"Harry won't know what hit him." Their grin was somewhat less than innocent as they picked up their stuff and cleared the room.

Three hours later, following their Mum's old words to build expectation, they arrived 10 minutes fashionably late. They were blushing a storm, wearing an odalisque outfit underneath their cloak. They found the room turned into their dream of coziness: a large stone room with a single overstuffed armchair in front of a small fireplace, a large and luxurious four-poster bed, and cold air drifting in through the cracks of the windows. A perfect room for sharing body heat with their cuddle-boy!

But drat; the odalisque outfit had never been part of such fantasies. More like a button-down flannel nightshirt. But wait: there's one such laying on the bed. Yay!

After closing the door and seeing Harry shivering in front of the fireplace, their first impulse was to run to him, jam themselves down into the armchair and pull him into their cloak. He eagerly latched onto their warm skin and quickly migrated to being below them inside the cloak. Then, while he still fought to stop shivering from the coldness of the room, a chilly draft got their ankles and made them pull up their legs inside the cloak, curling up on his lap. As soon as he stopped shivering and just holding them for warmth, his hands timidly began to explore. Feeling this, they shifted on his lap and ended in a lotus position with their back on his chest, threw their head back over his shoulder and began guiding his hands over their body. He let their hands guide him, but he was still too timid to allow his hands to roam too high on their calves or front. With a contented sigh, they



guided his hands around their midsection and allowed him to process it a bit. Not that they weren't blushing a storm, but having drunk a boldness potion kept them from stumbling too much. And he was indeed lost, as he showed with his next words.

"Eh, what are you wearing, Vati?"

They let out a little giggle before replying. "An outfit my Mum gave Pad and me for this day, whenever it came. My great grand father bought it in an Arab Emirate, and gave it to my great grand mother as a wedding night present. Ever since, the last four generations of women in my family have lost their virginity while wearing this." They felt how his cheeks inflamed in a blush on their neck.

"Well, as a matter of fact, I wanted to speak to you about that. You know I know you and your sister are taking turns to date me, don't you?"

"Yes" they said, nodding, even though it actually was news to them. "So, what gave us out?"

"You too are great at acting like each other, but it was suspicious enough that you would be walking on my left, then find a minute for yourself and return to walk on my right. But still, I didn't know for sure until our first kiss. First we kissed clumsily and shyly, then we were snogging with delight, then you went to the bathroom and came back all shy and clumsy again." Now being capable of watching both parts of the memory, the twins cringed: in retrospect, Parvati's acting had been stiff.

"So, you're angry at us?"

"Not at all, but I do want to talk with the two of you, simultaneously, before we take this step."

They nodded as they pulled his arms tighter around their body, but inwardly they cringed: 'Nine hours before the potion wears off, right?' 'Six AM. We'll finish the day as virgins.' 'Bugger!' 'Actually getting buggered would be good thing right now.' 'Don't make me think, Pad!'

'But we are showing him the potion then.' 'That's a given: this will already be the longest night in our lives.' Outward, they rose and turned, once again curling up on his lap. With their arms around him and glancing up to his face, they continued.

"You don't know how sweet you are, Harry. You just don't know how lucky we are to have you as a boyfriend."

He looked down, looking mortified. "I'm actually a horrible boyfriend. We've been dating for almost two years now, and I still can't tell the two of you apart."

The girls actually giggled at his distress, before rising and giving him a quick kiss on his befuddled face. "Our grandmother and grand-aunt have lived like that their entire lives: grandpa had completely given up on telling them apart by their fifth anniversary, and Mum can't even tell which is her mother and which is her aunt."

"So I better get used to not telling you apart?"

"Call us Pavana if you aren't sure." He had a good chuckle at that. "And, Harry?"

"Yes, Pavana?"

"My sister's supposed to take over at six AM, and I guess we should have our talk then. Even if we don't do anything, could we move over to the bed and cuddle there?"

"Whatever my dearest wants."

They hadn't exactly cuddled: after he dropped down to his trunks and they had shrugged off the Seven Veils in favour to the nightshirt and some cotton panties, they got together under the comforter and holding each other quickly turned into petting, then rubbing their bodies together, and finally them rolling on top of him, straddling his waist and looping their arms around his back, while he also looped his arms around their back and began to dry-hump them. That was an hour ago, their night shirt had long since scooted up, they were still holding tight to him, and he continued to softly rub his trunks right

onto their panties. And they couldn't move; wouldn't move: whenever their waist moved at all, he would stop moving, become overcome with a full body shiver and his arms would press down their hips into his own raising waist. Then he would stay frozen like that for a few seconds, before he took a couple of ragged breaths and resumed his earlier routine. His current control was THAT thin.

'I've never felt so desired, or so respected.'

'And no doubt at all that he is the ultimate boyfriend: not a single selfish bone in his body!'

'So sweet and loyal that he won't even seal the deal until he knows neither of us will get jealous.'

'I would strangle him for getting us this hot and bothered.'

'Then I would have his babies.'

'Me too.'

Such a tense night did wonders to their relationship: after they popped apart at six AM, they woke up Harry and demonstrated him the potion. Five minutes later they were proposing to him, he said yes and, when a month later Dumbledore died, they joined the Golden Trio in the search for the Hallows.

Disclaimer: Another set of Omake

Omake: Back In Time – Again, damn it.

The students were enjoying a nutritious lunch in the Great Hall when Harry Potter stood up suddenly with a look of profound annoyance on his face.

"God damn it," the boy screamed. "Why in the hell did this have to happen again?"

"What's wrong, Harry?" Hermione asked in concern.

"Went back in time again," Harry sighed. "It happens."

"What do you mean it happens?" Hermione asked shrilly.

"A question that all of us would like answered," Dumbledore said kindly.

"Eh?" Harry looked up at the old man. "I told you, it happens."

"And you've never tried to figure out why it happens?" Hermione asked incredulously.

"Gave up after a thousand or so years," Harry explained. "And why it couldn't wait just one more hour before sending me back . . ." Harry's shoulders drooped. "Just goes to show that I'm the universe's spittoon."

"What was so important that you didn't wish to leave it?" Dumbledore asked cautiously.

"Twins," Harry said with a stupid grin on his face. "Ms. Naughty Witch 2020 and 2021 were wishing me a very happy birthday."

"I see," Dumbledore said, unable to think of another response.

"Which reminds me," Harry said suddenly. "Neville, could you do me a favor?"

"What's that, Harry?" Neville asked timidly.

"I'd like you to autograph a couple things for me." Harry pulled what appeared to be a large stack of pornography out of nothingness. "All that if you don't mind."

"Neville becomes a porn star?" Ron asked incredulously.

"Sometimes," Harry agreed. "Usually when one of the Slytherin girls finds out about Hannah Abbott's crush and decides to steal him away for a bit of inept revenge. One thing usually leads to another and eventually she comes to the conclusion that he's too much for one woman and that's when she brings in one of her friends to help. Then another, and another, until Neville's got a harem that he needs to support. It's all in his autobiography, third book down."

Hermione forced herself to ignore the extremely rare books to get a couple questions answered. "How did you carry those with you?"

"Managed to create a subspace compartment after about five hundred years of research," Harry explained. "It's outside time and as soon as I can figure out how to enlarge it and make it able to support life, I'm going to live there full time."

"How many books can you fit into it?" Hermione licked her lips.

"Not sure," Harry admitted. "Do know that I've got a couple copies of Hogwarts's library in there, along with a few dozen others. Why do you ask?"

"Harry," Hermione squealed. The girl rushed across the room so fast that she left an after image to attach herself to his side. "I'll do anything for you if you teach me and let me access your library, anything."

"Moving right along," Dumbledore said loudly. "I take it you know about your destiny?" he said delicately.

"You mean the prophecy about me and Voldemort?" Harry asked bluntly.

"Errr." A bead of sweat worked its way down the Headmaster's forehead.

"Cause it turned out that one wasn't about me and Voldemort," Harry continued. "It was about Draco and Crabbe's daughter."

"Draco and Crabby had children together?" Ron asked sickly.

"I mean it was about Crabbe's daughter fighting Draco," Harry amended. "And yes, they did. Snape invents a potion in a couple years and you don't want to know the rest."

"Speaking of Severus," Dumbledore frantically tried to change the subject. "Has anyone noticed that he's been quieter then usual today?"

"I trapped him in an invisible box," Harry explained helpfully, ignoring Hermione's whispered promises to 'love him long time.'

Everyone's head turned to watch the Potions master frantically beating on the wall of an invisible box and screaming impotently.

"Used to just kill him and Voldemort whenever I arrived but that got boring after a couple millennia, this provides more of a show and lasts longer."

"All finished, Harry," Neville said helpfully.

"Thanks, Nev." Harry scooped up the materials and stored it in his subspace pocket. "And girls, they nicknamed him 'The Machine' when he was in porn. I suggest dating him in at least groups of ten."

"Thank you, Harry," Hannah Abbott said demurely.

"Now if you'll excuse me." Harry made a half hearted attempt to reclaim his arm from Hermione's death grip. "I've got to get going."

There' s a beach in Aruba that . . . do you mind letting go of my arm, Hermione?"

"Ohhh, me love you real good," Hermione giggled madly.

"Alright then," Harry agreed. "As I was saying, there's this beach that I really want to spend some time on before it gets destroyed in the alien invasion and that's where I'll be if anyone needs to contact me for any reason." He turned towards Neville who was currently being mobbed by eleven Hufflepuff girls. "That means send me autographed copies of your newest porn, Neville."

"Mmmph," was Neville's muffled reply.

"Thanks, buddy." With a muffled 'pop,' Harry Potter disappeared leaving behind only a still delirious Hermione and a pile of clothes. The beach was clothing optional.

AN: Kinda goes with Odd Ideas Chapter: 33. Been meaning to write another chapter of the involuntary time traveling Harry.

Omake for Catch You on The Flip Side 'Odd Ideas' Chapter 77

Flip You on The Catch Side

"Hey, Luna," Hermione said with a come hither smile, "I'm glad to see that you and Harry got back safely."

"Thank you, Hermione," Luna said with a smile.

"And I did a lot of thinking while you were gone," Hermione continued, "and I was hoping that we could get to know each other better."

"Perhaps later," Luna said with a shrug, "I'll be much too busy shagging Harry in the mean time."

"Need any help with that?" Hermione asked with a grin.

"I think I've got everything covered for now," Luna replied, "but thank you all the same."

"What?"

"I said that I've got everything covered, but thank you all the same."

"Oh." Hermione said faintly. "Thank you for your time, Luna."

"No problem, Hermione," Luna said, "bye bye." She smirked at Hermione's retreating back, this was for Luna Lovegoods everywhere.

Hermione stumbled back to her bed and collapsed bonelessly onto it. What was wrong? She wondered to herself. Why wasn't Luna cooperating? Hermione rolled over onto something strange.

"Crookshanks had better not have hidden something disgusting in my bed again," she muttered to herself. A bit of digging revealed an envelope containing a note and a book. "My other self may decide to be selfish and try to hog Harry all for herself," Hermione read the note, "this book will teach you the Lovegood style of seduction that will guarantee that you won't be condemned to a life of red hair and boredom."

AN: Thought about making this a second part to the first chapter, decided not to bother.

Omake: Betrayed

It had taken the Order months to find him and years to realize that he was even missing. Hermione snorted. As if Harry would stay with his relatives one second longer then he had to, Losing Harry, the chosen one, was one in a whole series of mistakes the Order had made.

"Harry," Hermione called out cheerfully.

"What do you want?" Harry asked calmly.

"Can't I just be catching up with an old friend?" Hermione asked with a smile.



"Sure you can, where are they?" Harry made a show of looking around.

Hermione winced. "I was talking about you."

"I seem to remember a letter you sent a couple months after they snapped my wand," Harry said flatly. "Explaining that you didn't want me to contact you again and how it was best if we were no longer friends."

"You don't know how difficult it was to be known as one of your friends," Hermione tried to explain. "The Ministry sent a woman to . . ."

"Deloris Umbridge," Harry interrupted. "Save it. One more time, what do you want?"

"The Ministry's admitted, quietly, that he's back," Hermione explained. "They want you to come home."

"What reason could I possibly have to go back to England?" Harry asked mildly. "Name one?"

"They didn't snap your wand," Hermione said quickly. "Dumbledore saved it."

"You expect me to go back to retrieve a twig?" Harry laughed. "Really?"

"We need you," she wailed.

"Then you shouldn't have thrown me away," Harry said simply.

"Your parents house," Hermione said suddenly.

"What about it?"

"We can get it returned to you," Hermione said desperately. "Dumbledore has enough influence over the current Minister to have it delisted as a national monument and returned to you."

"So far all I've heard is offers to return some of the things that were stolen from me," Harry pointed out. "Tell you what, why don't I tell you what I want before I'm willing to talk seriously about returning. You take that back to the important people, the ones who make decisions."

"Fine," she said with a hint of anger.

"I want the scales balanced," Harry offered with a smile. "I've been robbed, slandered, attacked, and imprisoned by the Ministry and the Order. Return my property, compensate me, and make a public apology. Then I'll be willing to sit down with someone important. Until then, they can all bugger off and so can you. Fair?"

"You've changed, Harry," Hermione said sadly.

"Having your Ministry attempt to murder you, your school expel you, and your friends disown you has that effect on a guy," Harry replied. "Especially if it all happens within the span of a couple months." He glanced at his watch. "I'm planning to leave this city and go to another in about twenty three hours. I will not leave a forwarding address, you have until then to get your answer."

AN: Polish by dogbertcarroll.

Same general concept I played with in 'Cold Blood.' His parent's house was nationalized to make a monument, his friends abandoned him under pressure from Umbridge, he got expelled for defending himself, and he left the country (likely with Sirius and possibly Remus) for a life of adventure abroad. Voldemort has been keeping a low profile and after Fudge is replaced, Dumbledore manages to convince the new Minister to do something, maybe let's a little of the Prophecy slip. The Order checks Privvy drive and panics when they realize that Harry left shortly after his trial and hasn't been seen since. They track him down and hope that Hermione can convince him to come back.

If I were to write this, I'd have Harry point out that the Ministry listed his parents home as a priceless part of the UK's magical heritage and

charge through the nose for back rent, demand a giant settlement for the attempted murder and the slander, demand his wand, demand Sirius be declared innocent, demand a large cash settlement for Sirius, etc. Finally, after Harry decides they're square, he tells them to fuck off and that they can deal with their own problems. He said he'd be willing to sit down, he never said that he'd help them.

Some other things I might throw in; Ron dead, why not. Neville going to prison for the Murder of one or more of the Lestranges, he shouldn't have used (insert spell name her) or used deadly force. Neville is murdered by the other inmates shortly after being incarcerated. Hermione working for the Order full time because she can't get a real job.

Omake: Coverup

"You wanted to ask me something, Harry?" Dumbledore asked curiously.

"I did, sir," Harry agreed. "I wanted to know how many rapes and murders someone could commit before you considered them irredeemable."

"Care to explain that question, Harry?" Dumbledore demanded.

"I know what happened to Sally-Anne Perks," Harry said calmly. "I know what you allowed Malfoy and Snape to do to her and I know that you helped cover it up afterwards."

"To start with, I would never allow a student to come to harm," Dumbledore growled. "I only found out about what happened to the girl after the fact. Secondly, Severus had nothing to do with the girl's death."

"He delivered the killing blow," Harry snapped.

"He gave her mercy," the Headmaster countered.

"Suppose we let that stand, how could you justify covering up the girl's murder?"

"What happened was regrettable. None the less, you must understand that young Draco was just a child at the time and I cannot allow a child under my protection to go to Azkaban."

"But you have no problem allowing them to be raped and tortured to death," Harry laughed. "Would it surprise you to know that Sally-Anne wasn't young Draco's last victim?"

"It would not," Dumbledore sighed. "None the less . . ."

"So I'll ask again," Harry interrupted. "How many murders will you allow?"

"Harry," Dumbledore said gently. "I . . ."

"Five?" Harry ventured. "Ten, twenty, fifty?" Harry stood up. "Malfoy admitted fifteen murders, and ten rapes."

"While regrettable, I still have hope that young Draco will . . ."

"How about Snape then?" Harry said harshly. "He admitted fifty deaths and nearly a hundred rapes. Was that too many, or has he failed to reach your magical number?"

"Severus' role as a spy forces him to . . ."

"How many murders can I commit then?" Harry demanded. "Tell me that or watch me walk out that door for the last time."

"Harry, I can't believe that you would ever . . ."

"Four," Harry said with a smile. "That's how many took part in what happened to Sally-Anne. Crabbe, Goyle, Malfoy, and Snape. All that's left is the man that allowed it all to happen. So tell me, Headmaster, is five too many?"

Disclaimer: Just your typical Harry sent to Azkaban by a corrupt Ministry fic.

Handcuffular

The Wizengamot went silent in shock as the hooded prisoner was dragged in by four fearful guards and chained down with chains thick enough to hold down a rampaging werewolf.

"Is this all necessary?" Dumbledore asked.

"Procedure," one of the guards said with a tremble in his voice. He double checked the chains and nodded to his fellows. "Alright," he said reluctantly. "Here we go." In one quick move, he pulled off the prisoner's hood with a shaking hand and fled to the far side of the room where the four cowered back from the prisoner's sight.

The prisoner blinked at the sudden light and looked around the room. "Finally decided to give me a trial then?" he asked in a raspy voice.

"I told you I wouldn't let you stay in Azkaban for long, Harry," Dumbledore said gently.

"You did," Harry agreed solemnly.

Prison didn't look to have been kind to the boy. He was dressed in a standard prisoner's jumpsuit with the sleeves torn off and the visible portions of his body were covered in tattoos.

He reached his hand up exposing the spider tattooed on the web of his thumb and scratched his cheek, drawing attention to the multiple teardrops tattooed just below his right eye.

Senior Undersecretary Deloris Umbridge stood up to read the charges. "You stand accused of . . ."

"Objection," a feminine voice called out. "The accused has been denied access to his lawyer."

"Who are you?" Amelia Bones asked mildly, doing her best to keep a grin off her face.

"His lawyer," a distinguished woman said simply.

"Tell you what, why don't we let her read the charges and then you can tell us why each one should be dismissed. If any aren't dismissed then you can have a bit of time alone with your client, how does that sound?" Amelia asked reasonably, having activated the Truth wards, that had laid unused since nearly the time of the founders by Wizenmagot rule, in preparation for this trial.

"Fine but only on the condition that we hear the lawsuit my client is going to bring against, well, I gave you the list earlier and it would take much too long to read it out right now."

"Agreed," Amelia said quickly. "Read the charges."

"Er . . ." The toad like woman blinked a couple times. "Now?"

"Yes, now."

"Underaged magic, inciting a riot, sedition, and violating the Statute of Secrecy," Umbridge said loudly.

"Your move," Amelia told the lawyer.

"As my client is being tried as an adult then it's clear that he hasn't been doing any underaged magic," the lawyer said smugly.

"Agreed, charge dismissed." Amelia banged her gavel, causing everyone around her to wonder where and when she'd gotten it.

"The muggle that witnessed the magic is my client's cousin and they live in the same house so there was no violation of the Statute of Secrecy."

"Agreed, dismissed." Amelia banged her gavel several times, enjoying the rush of power she felt when Fudge jumped.

"My client did not interact with the magical world at all between the end of school and his arrest so he didn't have any opportunities to practice sedition or incite any riots," the lawyer argued. "Which means that those two charges have as much substance as one of the Minister's promises."

"Case dismissed," Amelia ruled. "You said something about a lawsuit?"

"Wait!" Fudge squealed. "I've got more charges I'd like to bring against him."

"And you'll have to wait your turn until after this next case!" Amelia barked. "Now sit down."

"Eep."

"My client would like to sue the Ministry for false imprisonment, slander, and the reward for the defeat of Voldemort. He would also like to sue the Minister for assault, slander, and poor fashion sense."

"Does the Ministry wish to make a statement?" Amelia asked.

"Lies!" Fudge screamed as the Truth ward did it's work, not allowing him to speak anything, but the truth and reducing everything he said to what it was in truth. "All lies!"

"Does the Minister wish to make a statement?" Amelia said with a grin.

"More lies!" Fudge screamed panicking at the words coming out of his mouth and being unable to say any of the dozen excuses he had ready. "Even more lies!"

"So you claim that the accusations against you are lies?" Amelia asked, hoping to clarify things.

"No, all my answers were going to be lies!" Fudge replied. Realizing what he said, he covered his mouth with both hands.

"All right," Amelia said with a grin. "Any evidence?"

"Just happen to have a big stack of it," the lawyer dumped a stack of paper on the desk.

"Does the Ministry wish to address that evidence?" Amelia asked.

"The Ministry wishes that evidence would disappear," Fudge said quickly, finding much to his horror that he couldn't lie and was being forced to tell the truth. "And so does the Minister. Failing that, we'd like a chance to empty our accounts and a portkey to a jurisdiction that does not allow extradition."

"The court orders that the Minister's accounts be signed over to Mr. Potter, the Ministry to give him a sack full of gold and . . ." Amelia frowned as the witch next to her whispered something into her ear. "In a surprise split decision, for a portkey to be given to Minister Fudge, Madame Umbridge, and Lucius Malfoy."

"Objection," Lucius said loudly to his own surprise, relieved that he'd been out of the loop for this one, as even he wouldn't have tried to take it this far for fear Dumbledore would find his balls and curse the entire Wizenmagot en-mass for their obvious corruption. "I had nothing to do with this particular bit of dirty dealing."

"Objection," Augusta Longbottom bellowed, a little drunk and having tried to mumble something under her breath about believing Malfoy wasn't involved when hell froze over, before the ward compelled her to say something truthful. "I think fires are very romantic."

"Overruled and the court agrees that fires are romantic," Amelia intoned. "Have the portkey administered and Mr. Potter freed."

A smile appeared on Harry's face as the Minister and his companions disappeared. "Where did you send them?"

"Two feet above the giant stew pot on Cannibal Island," Amelia replied with a great deal of satisfaction, having planned it out well in advance with the hope that not one of the three would have been



smart enough to ask where the portkey would take them to. "Would you and your attorney care to join me in my office?"

"We'd love to," Harry's attorney replied.

"Free punch and pie in the atrium!" Amelia bellowed.

Everyone in the Wizengamot gave a mighty cheer before streaming out of the room, leaving only a very confused Dumbledore behind.

The old wizard looked around the empty chamber. "What just happened?"

IIIIIIIIII

The Warden of Azkaban was waiting with Hermione Granger in Amelia's office when they all arrived at the Director of Magical Law Enforcement's office.

"I'm a free man so you can't do anything to me now, King Screw," Harry said with a sneer.

"Nice sneer," the Warden complimented the boy.

"Tried to base it off the one Snape uses when someone asks him a question about safety," Harry said with a modest grin.

"He always was good at those," Harry's attorney giggled.

"Now then." Amelia sat at her desk and fixed everyone with a glare. "Why don't we all explain to our boss what in the hell happened today?"

"I don't work for you," Harry pointed out.

"Nor do I," his attorney said cheerfully.

"Fudge ordered Harry sent to Azkaban pending trial," the Warden reported. "I reported that to you and you set up the trial."

"Now why don't the people who don't work for me explain what happened?" Amelia demanded.

"I arrived for my trial and got arrested," Harry explained. "Dumbledore promised that I wouldn't spend much time in Azkaban. I went to Azkaban and then I came back."

"I found out about the Truth ward in some of my extracurricular reading and thought it was ideal for this case, as the Wizenmagot that had declared it illegal, but had left a loophole so they could use it on Heads of noble houses at their own request," Hermione said, "so I reported it to you."

"My husband told me Harry might need a lawyer." The Lawyer smiled at the Warden. "And he might have added that I'd have a chance to screw over Fudge, so here I am."

"Right," Amelia barked. "That still leaves one thing unexplained. Where did you get all those tattoos, Mr. Potter."

"There's a guy in cell block three that'll give you anything for a pack of cigarettes," Harry said in what he thought was a salty voice.

"I didn't ask about cell block three, I asked how you got yours," Amelia said sharply, years of dealing with young recruits, the scum of the world (politicians), and the occasional criminal making her damn hard to deceive.

"Uh . . ."

"Afraid that's my fault," the Warden said with a blush.

"Oh?" Amelia's eyes flashed.

"There's a kind of tinned biscuit I like and each one comes with a temporary tattoo," the Warden explained.

"You've been breaking your diet," the Lawyer scolded. "How many did you eat?"

"I don't recall," the Warden said mechanically, having used a memory charm to avoid that line of questioning well in advance.

"Harry?" the Lawyer asked sweetly.

"We went through three tins," Harry said with a blush. "But the first one was almost empty and I ate most of the other two."

"Wait till the other convicts find out you grassed on me," the Warden hissed.

"He's picking on me," Harry whined. "Do you know what they do to snitches in the joint?"

"Stop that," the Lawyer snapped glaring at her husband. "Don't worry, Harry. No one is going to find out that you grassed on my husband."

Hermione sighed, why was she always the only sane one in the room? "Maybe I'm under some sort of curse?" she mused to herself.

"What was that?"

"Nothing," Hermione said quickly. "When do you want to get your school supplies, Harry?" cause the bookstore should have gotten its shipment of new releases and she was just itching for an excuse to go.

"I'm not sure I'm going back to school," Harry rasped.

"What do you mean by that, Harry?" Hermione growled.

"Prison changes a man," Harry said simply. "Not sure I could play nice with the kiddies after what I've endured, after what I was forced to do to survive."

"You were only there for forty five minutes," Hermione retorted. "And I heard, it sounds like you spent almost all of it sitting in the warden's office eating biscuits and drinking tea."

"I wouldn't expect someone who didn't do any time to understand," Harry said sadly.

"Those who have never spent time in society's cage can never understand," the Warden agreed seriously, making his wife roll her eyes at the two.

"I . . . you . . . ohhhhh."

"You have to go back to school, Mr. Potter," Amelia interjected, putting an end to the conversation.

"Because they passed a law so I wouldn't leave magical England?"

"Because they passed a law stating that education was compulsory until the age of sixteen," Amelia corrected. "That means it doesn't matter that the court accidentally declared you an adult because the court did not accidentally declare you to be over sixteen."

"Hah," Hermione crowed.

"Guess I'm not going to that naked beach after all," Harry sighed. "It's the only thing that kept me sane when I was doing my time."

"What naked beach?" Hermione demanded.

"They've got 'em in other countries," Harry replied, his eyes filled with an unholy lust. "And they're filled with buxom veela women who like nothing better than green eyed wizards."

The Lawyer shot her husband a look, he gave a confused shrug in reply.

"Why don't we just end things here for now?" Amelia suggested, having heard more than enough. "You want to take Mr. Potter shopping before the stores close don't you, Ms. Granger?"

"That's right," Hermione agreed. "Thank you, Madame Bones." She seized Harry by the collar and began dragging the boy out of the room.

"Tell them you're charging everything to the Ministry accounts," Amelia advised as the two Hogwarts students left her office.

Harry and Hermione were met by a crowd of reporters the second they left the relative safety of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement. Seeing no choice but to answer a couple questions as they ran the gauntlet, Harry decided to answer a couple of questions as they ran the gauntlet.

"Mr. Potter," a reporter called out. "Now that you've been freed from you unjust imprisonment, what do you intend to do now?"

"I just want to get on with my life," Harry said mournfully. "Just gonna take things one day at a time."

"Mr. Potter," another called out. "How many men did you shank in vicious prison fights?"

"That's all behind me," Harry sighed, scratching his cheek to draw attention to the teardrops he had tattooed under his eye. "I'm trying to focus on the future."

"Mr. Potter . . ."

They finally reached the exit and moved on to the shopping district at Diagon Alley where Harry realized something, shopping is hell. It hadn't been too bad when he'd gone with Hagrid, in and out. The Weasleys weren't much worse since Molly had been distracted by her brood and underfunded. Shopping with Hermione on the other hand was unfiltered hell. It got so bad that Harry's mind blotted the whole thing out to protect his sanity, boy was Snape in for a surprise the next time he went snooping about Harry's skull.

The rest of Harry's all too short summer passed in a blur as he spent the whole time recovering from his awful ordeal. Pity the poor boy when he finds out that it could have been worse, he could have gone shopping with Lavender Brown and her sidekick Patil.

And so our Hero made it to Hogwarts where Madame Pomfrey made it a point to kidnap him on the first day for a quick check up and two weeks of mandatory bed rest.

Harry presented an odd sight as he made his entrance into the Great Hall on the first day of the third week of class. On his left shoulder sat his owl, Hedwig who was occupied by shooting predatory gazes at the extremely nervous chicken on his right shoulder.

It was Hermione that broke the silence, unable to contain her curiosity. "Why do you have a chicken on your shoulder, Harry?" She really hoped that this wouldn't be a repeat of the tattoo conversation.

"I don't have a chicken on my shoulder," Harry snapped. "And I think that you owe Hedwig an apology for confusing her for a chicken."

"Preck!" the owl agreed.

"I wasn't talking about Hedwig." Hermione sighed, it was going to be one of those days. "I was talking about the bird on your other shoulder."

"You mean my new phoenix?" Harry asked, shooting the bird a pride filled look.

Hermione closed her eyes and counted to ten. "That's a chicken, Harry."

"He's a phoenix, Hermione." Harry took the bird off his shoulder and waved it in the girl's face. "See?"

"Phoenixes are on fire and why does that bird smell strongly of naphtha?" Hermione's eyes widened in shock. "Don't you dar . . ."

Harry ignited the naphtha and watched proudly as the flaming panicking chicken ran back and fourth. "You were saying?"

"A burning chicken is not a phoenix," Hermione said flatly.

"But the flames aren't hurting him," Harry protested. "That's definite phoenix behavior."

"Casting a flame freezing charm on a chicken before setting it on fire still doesn't make it a phoenix," Hermione said firmly.

"You're just jealous that I have a phoenix and you don't," Harry sniffed.

Snape walked past with Crabbe and Goyle. "Well when's the last time you saw Mr. Malfoy?"

Harry grinned. At least now Malfoy had a purpose, he was perfect protection against any stray basilisks he happened across these days.

"Told you Harry was a light wizard," Ron announced smugly. "Otherwise a phoenix would never have bonded with him."

"Why wasn't your phoenix burning before, Harry?" Neville asked.

"He's afraid of fire," Harry explained patiently. "That's why he doesn't usually burn." He glanced at Hermione. "Except to prove to know it alls that he's really a phoenix."

"You did not just call me a know it all, Harry Potter," Hermione growled.

"Uh . . . I was talking about Ron," Harry said nervously. "And you should be nicer to me. I spent time in prison for a crime I didn't commit."

"I do know it all, don't I," Ron agreed. "See, Harry recognizes how great I am. Why don't the rest of you bums?"

"I . . ." Hermione closed her eyes as another wave of stupidity washed over her. "I think you should pull Hedwig off of your 'phoenix' unless you know where you can find another one."

"No, Hedwig!" Harry said firmly, pulling his owl off the traumatized chicken. "Bad owl. You can not eat my phoenix."

"Preck!" Hedwig cursed. Foiled again.

"But if you absolutely must sate your hunger for the flesh of an immortal magical bird, then eat the one Dumbledore has in his office. This one is mine."

"Preck!" Hedwig cheered. The owl launched herself off of Harry's shoulder and soared out of the Great Hall.

She returned a couple hours later looking a bit plumper than normal at which time the owl reclaimed her normal spot and promptly fell asleep on Harry's shoulder. Where she was and what she was doing is probably unimportant and not worth expanding upon at all.

"Hello, Harry," a distracted looking Headmaster greeted the boy. "You haven't seen Fawkes, have you?"

Harry shot a glance at the drowsy owl on his shoulder. "Nope, haven't seen him."

"Well, tell me if you do," Dumbledore asked as he started to walk away.

Hedwig chose that moment to belch, shooting a three foot tongue of flame out of her beak.

"You might check the Owlery later," Harry advised. "I heard he'll be hanging out in one of the dung piles."

"Thank you, Harry," Dumbledore said with a smile. The old man paused to squint at one of the birds on Harry's shoulder. "Fine looking phoenix you've got there."

"Thank you." Harry smiled widely. "He's been instrumental in helping my mind recover from the trauma of my unjust imprisonment."

"The password to my office is Zaken, don't hesitate to visit if you need to talk."



"I won't," Harry agreed.

|||||

The Gryffindor table went silent when Harry walked into the Great Hall and took his place at the table. No one said a thing until Colin nudged Neville.

"Uh . . . Harry," Neville stammered.

"What is it?" Harry growled.

"Why are you carrying a shiv, Harry?" Neville blurted.

"It's a habit I picked up in prison," Harry said in a gritty voice. "Have to have some way to protect yourself from the other prisoners."

"Did you ever have to use it?" Another student asked eagerly.

Harry stared at the other boy until he looked down. "Let's just say, a guy got it in the shower while I was there and I had nothing to do with it."

|||||

Hermione was sick of Harry's foolishness. A girl can only take so much stupidity before she has to take matters into her own hands and that's why she'd floored Sirius to tell him exactly what was going on with his godson.

"Harry's using the fact that he spent forty five minutes in prison as an excuse to do whatever he wants?" Sirius said dumbly.

"Yeah," Hermione growled. "And now he's dating twelve girls because he's endured such a 'terrible ordeal' that they're willing to share out of sympathy for him."

"We'll just see about that," Sirius said with a frown.

"Thank you, Sirius," Hermione said smugly. She knew that someone that had really endured the hardships that Harry was always talking about would be angry to hear about the boy's boasting.

"Move out of the way," Sirius growled. "I'm coming through."

Hermione watched smugly as the escaped prisoner crawled through the fireplace and into the Gryffindor Common Room. "Harry should be in the Great Hall right now," she added helpfully.

"I remember where it is," Sirius said through clenched teeth as he stormed out of the room.

Every eye in the Great Hall turned to stare at the disheveled man who burst through the doors. As he walked past, many hands reached up to pinch many noses to keep out the stench of unwashed dog.

"Harry Potter," Sirius shouted. "We have something to discuss."

"Come on then," Harry agreed. "We'll do it in private. Unless of course, you want to deal with our issue the way we used to resolve conflicts in the joint."

"You think you can take me?" Sirius said in a low, dangerous voice.

"I think you're getting old," Harry replied snidely. "But since you're my godfather, I'd rather not decorate the Great Hall with your entrails."

"Since you're my godson, I think it would be bad form to give you a Colombian necktie," Sirius sneered.

Sirius was able to keep himself contained until they were behind a locked door and several layers of privacy charms. "Harry."

"Yeah, Sirius?"

"Teach me how you parlayed the fact that you were an innocent man sent to prison into a man with twelve girlfriends," Sirius begged.

"Thirteen," Harry corrected.

"You gotta teach me," Sirius whined. "You just gotta."

"Well . . . you are my godfather," Harry said slowly. "Okay, the first thing you gotta do is . . ."

|||||||

Confident that her plan to straighten out Harry was on track, Hermione decided to busy herself with her other hobby; forcing house elves radically change their entire culture to one that didn't offend her delicate sensibilities.

She had just finished delivering a twenty minute lecture explaining exactly why they were wrong and how their lives would be much better if they would just submit to her genius when it happened . . .

"We is not not liking Dobby because Dobby is free, we is not liking Dobby because Dobby is pervert," one of the house elves announced.

"Just because he wanted to be free you . . ." Hermione started.

"No, no Dobby is pervert. Dobby pleasures himself with Harry Potter sir's unmentionables."

"Is true," Dobby agreed solemnly. "Dobby just can't help hisself."

"Oh." Hermione didn't really know how to reply to that statement. "I . . . uh . . ."

"Dobby makes Winky wear Harry Potter sir mask when she uses her strappy on," the little elf sobbed. "Winky doesn't want to wear a mask."

"Er . . ." Hermione's eyes darted around the room in search of the nearest exit.

"Happens to all unbound elves it does," an ancient green house elf explained. "Deviant sexual predators without a master we become."

"I . . . I gotta go talk to Harry," Hermione said in a rush as she rushed out of the room.

The house elves burst into cheers when their magic assured them that the girl was well and truly gone.

"Our plan is working," a house elf cheered. "And annoying book girl is tricked."

"Now Dobby can be Harry Potter sir's house elf," Dobby cheered.

"Now strange girl will stop trying to free elvies," another cheered.

"Now Winky can stop wearing the Harry Potter sir mask," the little elf sighed. "Winky cants see very well when she is wearing the Harry Potter sir mask and it chafes her noses."

The kitchen was silent after that last pronouncement.

IIIIIIII

Harry and Sirius rounded the corner to behold the odd sight of Severus Snape sexually assaulting the Gargoyle on guard in front of Dumbledore's office.

"Sevvv," Sirius said in delight.

"Black ye black bastard," Severus slurred, attempting to put a foot in Sirius' groin.

"I missed you too," Sirius said, wiping a tear from his eye.

"What in the hell is going on?" Harry demanded. "I thought you hated Snape?"

"Can't stand the bastard," Sirius agreed. "Sevvv here is a good friend of mine. He's the fifth Marauder, the secret one."

"What?" Harry asked dully.

"Snape's a bastard, Sevvv comes out when Snivvy drinks enough." Sirius laughed. "Half the reason he hated us was because he'd wake up in strange situations . . ."

"Like that time with the sexually curious goblins," Sevvv supplied helpfully.

"Yeah," Sirius agreed. "With no memory of what happened. Bastard would blame everything on us and would never believe it when we told him he did it to himself."

"Wow." Harry grinned. "Can you tell me about my parents, Sevvv?"

"I don't think that's such a good idea," Sirius tried to interrupt.

"Nonsense," Sevvv bellowed. "Harry, your mother had the most perfect tits I've ever seen on a woman . . . human woman, there was this troll that had a rack that was out of this world." Sevvv went to his happy place for a few minutes. "As for your father, well . . . don't believe what people tell you about how he only became an animagus so it wouldn't technically be bestiality when he had sex with does. I'm sure he had lots of other reasons."

"Uh . . ." Harry was saved from having to reply by his Godfather's quick thinking.

"Hey, look out the window," Sirius called out. "You ever see so many Aurors in one place before?"

"Nope, wonder what they want?" Harry scratched his chin. "Sirius?"

"Yeah, Harry?"

"We ever get around to clearing your name?"

". . . . guess that explains the Aurors," Sirius said thoughtfully. "Sevvv, you provide a distraction while I escape."

Sevvv gave his partner in crime a drunken thumbs up before lurching off to do god knows what.

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Amelia had just finished a rather thoughtful thank you note from the residents of Cannibal Island when the group assigned to capture Sirius Black, reported to be at Hogwarts arrived.

"Well?" she barked.

Shacklebolt handed over a parchment.

"We, the undersigned, in an effort to retain our sanity and avoid suicide or spontaneous combustion, have agreed to oblivate each other to expunge the horror we encountered in the entrance hall of Hogwarts. May God have mercy on our souls!"

AN: Busy with school so my writing has dropped off, should be finished in about 8-10 months.

Polish by: dogbertcarroll, meteoricshipyards, incubusfox3

Scenes by: meteoricshipyards

Typos by: djhardim, SP

Omake by: meteoricshipyards

"OK, I took a bath, I got a shave and a haircut (and it cost 2 knuts!) and I got clean clothes. What more do the women want from me?"

"Er, a boy recovering from a tramatic event being slightly emo can be cute," Tonk's said, using her matamorphmagus ability to increase her breast size to where it could hide Harry between them. "In an adult - not so much."

"MMMMPPPMMP!" Harry gasped as his head appeared between her cleavage. "Almost suffocated in there!"

Omake: Rivals

Draco's eyebrows knit together in confusion when he saw his two minions in step behind Daphne Greengrass.

"What are you idiots doing?" Draco demanded. "You're supposed to guard me, not that slut."

"You want we should show him some proper respect, boss?" Goyle rumbled.

"Later," Daphne's lilting voice replied. "I've got something I'd like to discuss with him first."

"Yes, boss."

"Discuss what?" Draco demanded. "What's going on?"

"I'm afraid I have some bad news for you, Draco," Daphne sighed dramatically. "It seems that someone's informed Harry Potter that he's being judged by his rival. You."

"Potter should be honored then."

"Why?" Daphne giggled. "Have any of your schemes ever worked?"

"Huh?"

"It's like this, Draco. You've been replaced, Harry couldn't drop you quickly enough."

"Replaced?" Draco squeaked. "Who?"

"Me." Her voice hardened. "Bother Harry again and I'm afraid the beating you're about the experience at the hands of my minions will be a pleasant memory."

"Wait till I tell Professor Snape about this," Draco squealed.

"You see?" Daphne addressed her minions. "First sign of trouble and he starts squealing about Snape or his father, one of many reasons

that he's just a poncy git with delusions of adequacy rather than a proper rival for Harry."

"Yes, boss."

"And as to Snape." Daphne smiled an explosion rocked the castle. "I'm afraid he just experienced a potions accident, shame there won't be enough of him left to fill a thimble. Harry really wanted to get a chance to piss on his grave and it's just not the same if you know the grave is empty."

"You killed our head of house?" Draco couldn't believe it.

"Harry did, said it wouldn't be fair to me not to have a biased authority figure in my corner and since my eldest sister happens to be a Potions Mistress . . . well, I'm sure you can follow the thought process."

"When my father hears about . . ."

"Harry also thought it wouldn't be fair if I didn't have a parent on the board of Governors, such a sweet boy." Daphne smiled, she was so fortunate to find someone so considerate. "Thankfully, there was enough of him to bury. I hear the line to piss on his grave is already three hours long."

"I . . . but . . . you . . ."

"I think that's everything I wanted to discuss with you," Daphne said thoughtfully. "Boys, why don't you give Draco a Little lesson on what words to never use around a lady?"

"You want one of us should join you to keep you safe, boss?"

"Harry's waiting for me outside," Daphne replied. "I'll be perfectly safe with him."

"Yes, boss."

AN: Something I've been meaning to write for a while.



## Omake2 Stick97

Today we are at the dedication for Malfoy Lake. What was initially viewed as a minor fundraising promotion quickly turned into an environmental catastrophe. Luckily for Narcissa Black, she has been given a percentage of the funds as a means of restitution for the damages done to Malfoy Manor.

Unbeknownst to the Wizengamot at the time of the promotion, Lucius had changed his will to be interred at his Manor at the suggestion of his wife. According to his wife, he wanted to "always watch over his family".

Due to wording on the legal forms, once signed, the action must take place in proportion to the amount donated, OR the level of frustration or emotion felt towards Lucius. In addition, the first ever loans given out by Gringott's for this fundraiser led to a rush on the bank, and far more willing applicants being able to participate.

What was once referred to Mount Malfoy, is now located at the center of a rather large and foul lake of urine.

While some wizards have been negatively affected by the Malfoy family's lack of "spreading the wealth", others have taken this as a errrr.. golden opportunity".

Due to the tremendous backlog of applicants, there tends to be a significant wait, especially for repeat donations.

Fred and George Weasley have set up a Wandering WWW trailer with themed merchandise and paraphernalia. Particularly popular are the Charmed Chest Waders, enchanted with an automatic Bubble Head charm. Made from specially majicked acromantula silk, they allow for one way fluid passage, and privacy for the discerning witch or wizard. Also popular with the witches is the Weasley whizzer, an astounding device that allows a witch to "stand and deliver". Additionally popular are a box of charmed cereal talking Malfoy heads for target practice. Sales have been especially brisk since the addition of Snape sneers, Dumble-O's and Fudge packs. Rental

broomsticks for aerial dispensation are also extremely popular. However, the hottest item would have to be their Black Ale, with FloMax additive. Great tasting and more filling, it allows the busy witch or wizard to be cooled and refreshed while allowing one better discharge rate than an overpowered Aguamenti charm.

We would like to thank the WWW for their tireless service, as well as the law-firm of Granger-Potter, Greengrass-Potter, Patil-Potter, and Potter, for their help and explanation of the legalese. This is Luna Lovegood-Potter signing off.

"Oi, Gerry, hand me an ale and my Whizzer, I need to hit the Malfoy before I head back to the Pottery!" laughed Luna.

Omake for Old Soldiers: Bagram Airbase

Malcolm Luthor pasted an award winning smile on his face when he saw the tasty bird sitting in the Green Beens Coffee Cafe. He didn't normally go for the studious type, but in this case he was willing to make an exception.

"Just got back in after a three week patrol," he purred, claiming the chair beside her. "Kept thinking of three things while I was out. A shower, a coffee, and a pretty girl. I've had my shower, I've got my coffee, and I've found my pretty girl."

"I'm engaged," Hermione said without looking up from her papers.

"So?" he leaned in. "Does your fiancé know what it's like to live life knowing that you . . ."

The girl looked up. "Malcolm Luthor thirty five, assistant manager at the Base Exchange. Graduated last in your class, twice passed over for promotion, suspected of embezzlement, and engaged to Abigail Smith. I can't imagine she'll be happy to hear that you've been chatting me up."

"How do you know all that?" he croaked.

"More worrying for you, I can't imagine my fiancé will be too happy to hear about it either," she continued, ignoring his question. "Those large gentlemen behind you are two of his."

Malcolm felt a large beefy hand come to rest on his shoulder.

"Major wanted us to tell you that he just got in," one of the men reported. "Says he's gonna catch a quick shower before he meets with you."

"Thank you," Hermione replied with a smile. "Do you mind showing my guest out? He's sitting in Harry's spot."

Couple Omake by: Sweet Kagamine Kiss

I really like this story of yours. Some are funny to read... hm... can't help it but make my own Omakes. XD

Title: I don't think we're in England anymore.

"Where the heck am I?" Harry muttered. Pushing Voldemort through the veil wasn't a smart idea.

He got up... and saw that he was in a giant crater. There was some young man with spiky blond hair wearing a strange black and orange jumpsuit, and on the other side was a man in a black get-up, strange-looking eyes, and black piercing all over. Oh, and he had orange hair. Strange... who the bloody hell has orange hair? Aside the Japanese otakus?

"Where am I?"

"Hey, get out of the way!" Naruto shouted, as Pein came at Harry with intent to kill.

Harry reacted first. "Avada Kedavra!"

Pein was completely taken by surprise when the jet of green light hit him... and Naruto's mouth hung open, as did the mouths of the survivors in what remained of Konoha as the man simply toppled

forward, and ceased moving. Of course, seeing magical energy physically taking shape around the now dead man's right hand was anything but a friendly greeting.

Title: Another way to restart your Life.

Harry Potter opened his eyes.

"Huh?"

The alarm clock buzzed, and he smacked it, silencing it.

He heard a moan between him. He found himself to be... older. And he could see better without his glasses! But, he was also naked in his bed with two girls. Hermione and Luna. And while Hermione pressed her boobs against his back, he felt his manhood gripped by Luna's hands.

Out of all the possible scenarios-

"Oh, sweetie, you're up," came Lily's voice from the door. His mother just walked in, and stared at her son as if it was a normal occurrence.

"You and the girls get cleaned up and dressed properly. And I hope you remembered to use the Anti-Pregnancy Charm."

She shut the door.

... Okay... a small voice in his mind told him this: Bang your hot naked mother with your girlfriends! And for some strange reason, Harry felt he had to comply with the voice.

Disclaimer: They're creepy and they're kooky, Mysterious and spooky, They're all together ooky . . .

## A Place to Belong

Vernon had worked himself into a fury by the time he'd gotten home. How dare they! How dare they subject his perfectly normal family to a load of freakish yanks!

"Bunch of abnormal mutants," Vernon muttered under his breath. He'd been 'volunteered' to host a small dinner for a foreign client and his family and after meeting the man, Vernon was less than pleased.

"Boy!" Vernon said loudly, grabbing Harry by the shoulder.

"Yes, Uncle Vernon?" Harry replied meekly, ignoring the grinding sensation from his shoulder where his uncle was gripping him.

"You will be on your best behavior," Vernon growled. "I don't want Dudley to be exposed to these... people, so he's going to be spending the night at a friend's house. You are to distract the two brats while I talk to my client, understand?"

"Yes, Uncle Vernon," Harry agreed quickly. Inwardly he was jumping for joy, hoping to finally get a chance to make a friend or two. After all, according to Vernon's half coherent rants they were freaks too.

On Vernon's orders, Harry was waiting at the window, in clothes Vernon had actually spent money on, and so was the first person to see the strange old car pull up to the house.

"They're here, Uncle Vernon," Harry called out, his eyes locked on the machine in hopes of getting his first look at the people he hoped would be his first friends.

His breath caught when two children about his age stepped out. The first was a pudgy boy with messy blond hair and the second a girl with black hair pulled into two severe braids.

"Stop gawking at them and get away from that window!" Vernon bellowed. "I won't have you ruining this deal with your rudeness."

"Yes, Uncle Vernon."

Vernon plastered what he thought was a congenial look on his face and opened the door for his 'guests.'

"Evening, Vernon," Gomez greeted them, "I'd like to introduce you to my lovely wife, Morticia."

"Charmed," the woman purred.

"Er . . . right," Vernon stammered, unnerved by the way their daughter was staring at him, rather like his sister Marge stared at a runty pup, before deciding to have it culled. "This is Petunia."

"And our wonderful children, Pugsley and Wednesday," Gomez continued.

"Good to meet you," Vernon grumbled. He was horrified by the thought of letting these 'people' into his house.

Perhaps he should have picked up a grill and done everything in the back yard? He abruptly cut that line of thought. If he'd done it in the back yard, then the neighbors would have seen.

Much better to keep them inside, even if it did mean sullyng his home. He'd just have to make the boy clean everything with extra bleach to make up for it.

Gomez glanced from Vernon's face down to Harry with a look of expectation.

"Er, this is the boy . . . Harry."

"Pleasure to meet you, Harry," Gomez said grandly. He held out his hand and was a bit surprised when the boy took it. He hadn't expected anyone raised by the Dursleys to have any manners.

"Pleasure to meet you, sir," Harry replied brightly.

"And this is my wife, Tish."

Harry found himself holding the woman's hand.

"A pleasure, I'm sure," she regarded him with a cold smile.

"The pleasure is all mine," Harry said, mimicking what he'd seen in a rare glimpse of television. Now what had happened next? Harry's eyes lit up and he bent to kiss her knuckle.

"What a perfect little gentleman," Morticia said approvingly.

An uneasy grin appeared on Vernon's face as he watched the boy interact with the freaks. "Why don't we send the children to play in the other room while we adults get down to business?" Vernon suggested. Anything to get away from that bloody girl and her unending stare.

"Capital idea!" Gomez proclaimed loudly.

"Harry," Petunia barked. "Why don't you take young . . ." she groped for the children's names. "Wendy and Paul to the back yard?"

"Yes, Aunt Petunia. Come on, guys. Let's go."

Harry rushed to the door and held it open for the other two children, who soon followed, after receiving a discreet nod from their mother.

Wednesday and Pugsley regarded Harry with profound disinterest as he led them to a corner of the yard and prepared to introduce himself.

"My name's Harry," he said brightly, introducing himself the way he'd seen other children at school do when they were trying to make friends.

"Wednesday," the girl said coldly. "And this is my brother, Pugsley."

"It's okay," Harry said quickly, wanting to reassure them he was like them as opposed to being a 'normal' kid like Dudley.

"What is okay?" the girl asked flatly, all the while regarding Harry as if he were something she'd scraped from her shoe.

"I'm a freak too," Harry explained happily. "So I was hoping that we could be friends."

"Freak?" Wednesday asked her pupils taking on a serpentine cast. "Who said that?"

"Uncle Vernon," Harry replied.

"Harry, was it?" Wednesday asked with the barest hint of a smile. "Why don't you come over here with me?"

"Sure," Harry agreed. Not noticing the meaningful look the girl had shared with her brother.

"Tell me more about what your Uncle Vernon has said about my family and how you are like us."

The conversation that followed was enlightening, to say the least.

IIIIIIIIII

Gomez winced at Vernon's laugh. Bad form to laugh at one's own joke, worse to tell such bad ones.

"I say old man, do you mind if I smoke?" Gomez pulled a finely made silver cigar tube out of his jacket.

"Not at all," Vernon agreed quickly. He silenced his wife with a look.

"Splendid." Gomez frantically tried to think of something that would keep his host from trying to make conversation, or worse... jokes. He glanced over at Morticia who took the cue.



"Look how well they get along," Morticia cooed. The other three adults turned to look through the window.

Wednesday had her brother tied to a tree while Harry gathered kindling for the fire with a frighteningly wide smile on his face, quite like Pugsley's own.

"Wonderful lad," Gomez agreed. "Reminds me of myself at his age."

"Er . . ." Vernon wasn't sure how to deal with the situation.

"Almost seems a shame to call them in for dinner," Morticia sighed, seeing Harry gleefully attempt to start a fire by rubbing two sticks together as directed by Wednesday.

"Yes," Vernon agreed with a strained smile, "quite."

With a sigh, Morticia stood up and seemed to glide towards the back door. "Come along Wednesday," Morticia ordered, "we should freshen up before we eat."

"Yes, mother," Wednesday agreed as she followed Morticia to the facilities.

"How are you getting along with Harry?" Morticia asked her daughter.

"He had several interesting things to share about our 'host,' mother."

"Do tell."

IIIIIIII

Gomez was almost shocked by how easy it had been to shut Vernon up, so that he could enjoy a quiet conversation with young Harry. Why, he hadn't even needed Pugsley's distraction. Used it anyway of course, would have been a shame to waste it.

Ignoring the purple smoke wafting out of the kitchen, Gomez looked down at the boy with a wide grin. "So, Harry, do you mind if I call you Harry?"

"No, sir." Harry managed to keep all but a slight smirk off his face as he watched the Dursley's nice normal life crumble. He was going to have to set it all to right later, so he may as well enjoy it while he had the chance.

"Wonderful, now why don't you tell me about your hobbies?" Gomez continued.

"Hobbies?" Harry asked in confusion.

"The things you do for fun," Gomez prompted.

"It was fun playing 'burn the heretic' with Wednesday," Harry offered. "I'm sorry I couldn't get the fire started, but I've never done it before."

"There's a trick to using a bow drill," Gomez explained calmly "I'll show you later."

"Yes, sir."

"What I meant was, what did you like to do for fun before we came here?"

"Uh . . ." Harry searched his mind for the right answer.

"Too many things to count, eh?" Gomez laughed. "I was the same way when I was your age." He caught the Dursleys breathing sighs of relief out of the corner of his eye.

"MY KITCHEN," Petunia squealed, finally noticing the smoke.

"Never a dull moment, eh' Harry?" Gomez laughed.

"No, sir," Harry agreed with a wide grin, unable to contain his mirth any longer. What followed was the best night of Harry's short life. Needless to say, it was also the worst the Dursleys had ever experienced. Alas, all good things must come to an end and it was with some regret that Harry watched his new friends leave.

"Wonderful evening," Gomez enthused, "going to have to do it again sometime."

"Lovely," Vernon said with a severely strained smile. "I . . . I look forward to it," he managed to say through clenched teeth.

"How does tomorrow sound?" Gomez asked immediately.

"Don't be rude, darling," Morticia interjected, "they've already been kind enough to host us . . ."

"Yes," Gomez agreed cheerfully, "we must have you for dinner tomorrow."

"Tomorrow?" Vernon said weakly. "I'm not sure . . ."

"We have plans," Petunia said quickly.

"Shame," Morticia sighed, "we'd have loved to have you."

"What about young Harry?" Gomez asked intently. "Is he free?"

"The children get so lonely when we travel," Morticia lamented. "It would be nice to have someone for them to play with."

"We'd be happy to be rid of the boy for the night," Vernon said quickly. He didn't notice the slight frowns that appeared as a result of his pronouncement. "In fact, take him for the whole week if you like."

"It's settled then," Gomez said loudly, forcing a cheerful grin on his face with some effort.

Vernon waited until the freaks were well and truly gone before turning to the one they'd, as yet, been unable to rid themselves of.

"Boy, kitchen, now!" he roared.

"Yes, Uncle Vernon," Harry agreed. He was lucky that night, the Dursleys had wanted to turn in early and so he'd only had to work for two hours before being locked in his cupboard.

|||||||

Vernon awoke early to the sounds of someone loudly knocking a jungle beat on his front door accompanied by enthusiastic use of the doorbell. Needless to say, he wasn't in the best of moods, especially after a quick glance out the window confirmed that the sun had not yet risen.

"What the bloody hell . . . Mr. Addams," Vernon backpedaled quickly, "didn't expect to see you this early."

"Just dropped by to pick up young Harry," Gomez explained, "never put off what you can do right away."

"Yes," Vernon agreed, "I've always thought that myself. Your . . . uh . . . daughter isn't around, is she?" Vernon sincerely hoped that he'd never have the displeasure of seeing the creepy little brat ever again.

"She's visiting relatives with my lovely wife," Gomez replied,

"I wasn't aware that you had family in England," Vernon replied. Probably Irish or some such, he thought to himself, no way decent folk would have anything to do with these freaks.

"My sister in law married one of your countrymen," Gomez said cheerfully. "Now, about Harry?"

"Yes, I'll . . . uh, have the boy meet you in the car."

"Right then," Gomez agreed. His eyes narrowed just a bit. "Have him out soon then, eh?"

"Of course," Vernon said quickly. He managed to resist the urge to slam the door shut and stormed over to the cupboard under the stairs. "You, boy, get up!" he bellowed.

"Yes, Uncle Vernon."

"Get dressed and get out," Vernon ordered, "freaks are waiting for you."

"Yes, Uncle Vernon."

"Be quick about it, I don't want the neighbors to see them in front of my house."

"Yes, Uncle Vernon." Harry grabbed the bundle of clothes he'd prepared the night before and slipped out of the house to meet Mr. Addams for what he was sure would be the best week ever.

"Morning, Harry m'boy," Gomez said cheerfully.

"Good morning, sir."

"See you packed your things."

"Yes, sir."

"Eaten breakfast yet?"

"No, sir."

"Well, I dare say we'll be able to pick something up on the way. Nothing as good as Grandmama's cooking of course."

"Of course," Harry agreed quickly.

"But I'm sure we'll manage."

"Not to disparage your countrymen's cooking," Gomez said as they left the Inn, "but I couldn't taste any Toad in the Toad in a Hole and the blood pudding..."

"Not enough blood?" Harry guessed.

"Exactly! I think they overcooked everything, so it all came out rather bland. Well just you wait until you taste Grandmama's cooking! I'll

wager she can make a Toad in the Hole that'll still hop going down and I know for a fact that her blood pudding is to die for!"

A man in a purple robe stopped as he spotted Harry. "Harry Potter, as I live and breath... it's an honor to meet you!" the man gushed shaking Harry's hand before suddenly rushing off.

"What was that about?" Gomez asked curiously.

Harry shrugged. "Don't know. It just happens occasionally."

"I have the same thing happen when I meet Morticians," Gomez commiserated. The Addams patriarch checked his watch. "Fancy a quick trip to the Tower of London, Harry? I hear they've got some new implements on display." He especially wanted a chance to examine their Scavenger's daughter.

"That would be great," Harry enthused. "I've never been there before."

"Shame we've only got time for a quick walk through today then," Gomez said grandly. "We'll have to remember to make a day of it later."

What followed was the best day of Harry's life. They'd made a quick tour of the Tower and Harry was amazed at the extensive knowledge Mr. Addams had regarding the implements of torture and execution. Even the guards had been impressed, offering a chance to examine parts of the collection not on public display in exchange for another lesson on their use.

After that they'd had another disappointing lunch on the way to the family's lodgings where Harry had met up with his new friends for another game of 'is there a god' until they finally got called in for supper.

Harry looked down at the food they'd set before him with an unreadable look on his face.

"Something wrong with grandmama's cooking?" Wednesday asked without intonation, wondering if he was going to show himself to be disappointingly average after showing himself to be almost up to Addams standards thus far.

"Is it . . ." Harry stammered. "Is it all for me?" he finally asked hesitantly.

"Course it is," Gomez assured the boy, "a growing boy like yourself needs a lot of food."

"And there's more when you finish with that portion," Morticia added.

Harry dug into the meal without hesitation and a great deal of enthusiasm. Sure it was different from what he got from the Dursleys, there was also about ten times the amount and they hadn't forced him to make any of it. Life was good for Harry Potter at the moment.

He never saw the measured looks the older Addamses exchanged over his head as he switched to a heavier knife to pin it down and stop its wiggling.

Gomez called the boy over after he'd finished his evening cigar.

"Yes, Mr. Addams?" Harry asked eagerly.

"Noticed you had a bit of trouble with dinner," Gomez observed.

"Sorry, sir."

"Don't be sorry," Gomez said cheerfully, "be more serious with your bladed weapon training so that you're ready next time."

"I don't have any bladed weapon training," Harry said shyly.

"What?" Gomez shouted in dismay. "At least tell me that you've mastered the basics of blunt instruments!"

"Sorry."

"Don't be sorry, be in the study in five minutes."

"Yes, sir," Harry sighed. He knew from long experience what the consequences of disappointing an adult would be.

The boy braced himself for what he knew was about to happen as he knocked on the door frame to catch Gomez's attention.

"Ah, Harry my boy. Glad you could make it." The man reached under his desk. "Here you are." Gomez handed Harry a long box. "It's the same blade I learned with when I was your age."

"You're not going to use your belt?" Harry asked slowly, shocked beyond belief that he wasn't going to be punished.

"We'll cover the proper way to wear a sword after you've mastered the basics," Gomez said with a wave. "Now if you'll excuse me, I'm afraid that I've got some sudden business to attend to."

Morticia found the boy a few minutes later, looking confused and still clutching the box he'd been given.

"What's that you have there?" the woman asked.

"I'm not sure, Mr. Addams gave it to me," Harry replied.

"What are you waiting for," Morticia prompted, "open it up."

Harry opened the box to reveal a razor sharp blade made of fine Toledo steel. The boy ran a careful finger down the blade, marveling at the silky smooth finish.

"Do you know how to use that?" Morticia asked.

"No, Mrs. Addams," Harry said quickly.

"Wonderful," the woman said in satisfaction, pleased that the boy knew his limits. "Come with me."



The woman spent a few minutes to show him the basics before drawing a sword of her own.

"Defend yourself," she ordered.

Harry leapt to the side to avoid being impaled and took a step back to avoid her follow up attack.

With a frown, Morticia maneuvered the boy into a corner to limit his mobility and struck once more.

Harry clumsily dodged the sword thrust, losing his grip on the rapier in his hand in the process.

"Is there some reason you aren't fighting back, child?" Morticia asked calmly.

"I'm allowed to do that?" Harry asked in shock.

"Of course you are, why else would we give you a sword?"

"Well . . . I've got fists but I'm not allowed to fight back when Dudley uses his on me," Harry replied.

"I see," she said flatly. "Never mind all that, pick up your sword and we'll take it from the top."

"Yes, Mrs. Addams."

Harry swung clumsily at Morticia, who allowed the blow to land to see what his reaction would be.

Harry froze for a second as blood ran down her side practically unnoticeable among the black of her dress, but standing out a stark blood red against her pale skin. Seeing that she was fine he almost smacked himself in the head, he'd momentarily forgotten they were like him, but he still had to ask just to make sure, "Are you sure it's ok to cut up that dress? It's really nice."

She bestowed a smile upon him. "This old thing? It was about due to become cleaning rags or cut up for restraints, this is a much more fun way to cut it up then using scissors, wouldn't you agree?"

"Yes, ma'am," Harry said brightly and brought his sword back to the guard position she'd shown him.

|||||

Gomez's face was expressionless as he watched the Dursley family sit down to their evening meal. He'd originally thought to offer to take young Harry off the oaf's hands, maybe throw a bit of money at the fat slob that obviously knew nothing of the value of family. Seeing this though, this scene of frightening stultifying fossilized conformity gave him other ideas. The Dursleys wanted to be average, to be unexceptional, to be boring? A brief flash of light illuminated Gomez's face as he lit his cigar. He could work with that.

"Back to the family, Lurch," he ordered.

"Unnnhhh."

Harry and the other children had been bundled off to bed by the time the patriarch of the Addams family returned home.

After an intimate reunion with his wife, the man got down to business.

"How was he?" Gomez asked.

"Good reflexes and the little darling didn't shrink away from making lethal blows," Morticia replied. "Rare to find a someone his age that hasn't picked up any bad habits."

|||||

As was his habit, Harry awoke early the next morning to make breakfast for his ungrateful family. Several seconds later, a smile appeared on the boy's face as he remembered where he was. He eagerly leapt out of bed and threw on his best set of cast offs. The

day before had been the best of his life and he couldn't wait to see what would happen next.

The house was silent and for want of anything else to do, the boy decided to make his way down to the kitchen. It was there he found that he wasn't the only one awake so early.

"Couldn't sleep?" Grandmama cackled.

"I always wake up this early," Harry replied.

"I suppose you can help me cook then," the old woman said. "Since you're up."

"Okay," Harry agreed. "What do you want me to do?"

"Use that club there to stun the ingredients," she replied. "Don't hit them too hard, we want them to still be kicking when they go on the table."

Harry reached into the bag of 'ingredients,' pulled out a struggling toad, and gave it a soft tap on the back of the head.

"Gonna have to hit him harder then that or he'll jump out of the pot," the old woman instructed.

"Like this?" Harry gave the toad a firm wack.

"Just like that," she agreed. "Toss 'em in the pot after you get them stunned."

With a smile, Harry happily set about his work stunning toad after toad with ruthless efficiency.

The Patriarch of the Addams clan was the next to descend. "Decided to help out, did you?" he asked cheerfully.

"Yes, Mr. Addams," Harry agreed.

"Mind if I steal him away for a bit, Grandmama?" he asked grandly.

"Go ahead," the old woman said with a wave. "He's mostly finished up here anyway."

"Come on, Harry." Gomez threw an arm around the boy's shoulders and led him to the study.

"What can I do for you, Mr. Addams?" Harry asked, wide eyed and eager to help.

"Harry m'boy," Gomez began.

"Yes, Mr. Addams?"

"Gomez, please. Now then." Gomez cleared his throat. "Just for the sake of knowing the answer, have you any objections to, and this is just hypothetical of course, but do you have anything against moving to America, permanently?"

'With an eye towards joining the family,' Gomez added to himself. It wasn't too early to start thinking about Wednesday's future after all. "That way you'd be able to visit us as often as you like."

"Would it be possible?" Harry asked hopefully.

IIIIIIIIII

Gustov Grunning, owner of Grunning's Drills was pacing in his office when his largest potential customer arrived. 'Damn it,' he thought to himself. 'Why'd they put a drone like Dursley on something so important?' He'd crucify anyone responsible if Dursley had managed to, as expected, sour the account.

"Gustov," Gomez said loudly. "How are you today?"

"Wonderful, Mr. Addams," Mr. Grunning said with a weak smile. "Yourself?"

"Smashing, absolutely smashing." Gomez grinned. "You Brits really know how to throw a party."

"How did Vernon treat you?" the owner asked nervously, more than a bit afraid of the answer.

"Absolutely wonderful people," Gomez said cheerfully, "in fact I'll take a million units."

"A million?" tGustov choked, that was enough to triple the profit margin that year.

"You drive a hard bargain, my friend. Two million," Gomez agreed, "but only on the condition that my good friend Vern comes to America so I can consult with him on a daily basis. All this flying is making my arms tired, eh?"

"Heh heh," he laughed dutifully. "Consider it done Mr. Addams."

"Splendid." Gomez pulled out a large gold pocket watch and checked the time. "Hate to do business and run, but I'm afraid I have to get back to the family. You understand, don't you, old man?"

"Of course I do, Mr. Addams," Gustov said quickly. "I'm a family man myself." He waited until the eccentric billionaire was well and truly gone before collapsing in relief. Gustov wasn't sure what the man wanted with Vernon and to be quite frank, he didn't care. They could roast Dursley in a pot or shoot him to the moon, it was all the same to him so long as they didn't cancel their purchase.

The owner reached over and hit the intercom button. "Cheryl."

"Yes, Mr. Grunning?" his secretary's voice replied.

"Have Dursley meet me in my office, now."

"Right away, Mr. Grunning."

Vernon walked into the CEO's office with a look of expectation on his face. "You called for me, sir?"

"Just wanted to congratulate you on the fine work you did with the Addams account," the CEO replied.

"Glad to be of service to the company," Vernon replied.

"And don't think there won't be a reward for your excellent work," the CEO continued.

"What sort of reward?" Vernon asked greedily.

"I was thinking of promoting you to branch manager," the CEO mused. "That is, if you think you're up to it."

"Branch manager?" Vernon said dumbly. It would mean a considerable rise in pay and prestige. "Of course, sir."

"Sure you don't want to talk it over with the wife?" The CEO asked. "The new position may require a move."

"We've already discussed the possibility," Vernon replied. "Just never thought it would happen so soon."

"Wonderful, if you'll just sign here?"

"What's this clause mean?" Vernon asked.

"Merely informs you that we won't be able to hire you on at your old position if you find that the new responsibilities are too much to handle."

"That won't be a problem, sir." Vernon eagerly signed the contract.

"I knew I could count on you," the CEO said warmly. "One step closer to partner, eh?"

"Yes, sir."

"Imagine you want to get home to tell the wife the good news and to start packing," the CEO continued. "So why don't we have a toast to

your good fortune first and then you can have the rest of the week off, with pay of course."

"Thank you, sir." Vernon was glowing, things were finally looking up.

|||||||

While the Dursleys took a long awaited vacation, Harry spent the next two weeks preparing the house for their move to the United States. He couldn't wait to see Wednesday and Pugsley again.

The plane ride was wonderful, another great experience to add to his growing collection. Not only had the Dursleys insisted on putting him in another part of the aircraft, but the Stewardesses gave him extra helpings and a pair of pilots wings.

Harry's excitement level grew and grew as the family went through customs until he could hardly contain himself.

Vernon spent the entire drive to their new residence complaining about everything. The drivers, the side of the road they drove on, the weather, and the ungratefulness of the bastards for leaving the empire. Harry heard none of it, all he could think about was that he'd be seeing his friends again.

"Boy!" Vernon's shout drew Harry from his reverie. "Get out and tell those freaks to get their monstrosity away from our new house."

"Yes, Uncle Vernon." Harry got out the door and looked around to see what his uncle was talking about. It didn't take him long to find it. Sitting in front of a bland yellow house with a white picket fence was the biggest car Harry had ever seen, with the biggest man he'd ever seen in the drivers seat.

Harry walked up to the door and tapped on the window. "Excuse me."

"Unnnnnnggg." The giant turned to look down at him.

"Harry, m'boy. Good to see you again," Gomez's familiar voice caused Harry to spin around. "I see you've met Lurch."

"Pleased to meet you, sir," Harry nodded to the family's butler.

"We've already set up a room for you at the house," Morticia announced.

"Good thing we did too," Gomez agreed. "I wouldn't be able to live with myself if we left you in this . . . place." He shook his head in disgust. "All those open windows to let sunshine and fresh air in."

"What's the hold up?" Vernon bellowed. "Boy, you . . . Mr. Addams." Vernon's tone changed in a second. "What are you doing here?"

"Live just up the hill." Gomez waved, drawing attention to the large imposing manor perched above the Dursley's nice normal life."

"You live up there?" Vernon felt ill, he'd made a terrible mistake.

"Looks like we're going to be neighbors, Vern ol' pal," Gomez agreed. "Wonderful, isn't it?"

Vernon went deathly pale. "No," he gasped. "This can't be happening."

"Insisted you be posted here to be my own personal salesman," Gomez continued. "That promotion is quite a feather in your cap, eh?"

"This must be a nightmare," Vernon mumbled to himself. "A horrible nightmare."

"And it's close enough that Wednesday and Pugsley can visit young Harry every day," Morticia cooed.

Vernon seemed to collapse. "I . . . I . . . I . . ."

"Might be better if young Harry came up to visit us," Gomez suggested with a smile. "Not to disparage your new home, but I doesn't look like you've got too much room."



"Yes." Vernon seized the idea like it was a life preserver. "Better if the boy went with you." Vernon was hit by a sudden flash of inspiration. "In fact, perhaps it would be best if he stayed up at your house." And if you all stayed as far away from here as possible.

"If you think that would be best," Morticia murmured.

"Then it's settled," Gomez shouted. "Harry, gather your things."

AN: I'll be honest; I will try to write a second part of this, you shouldn't expect it any time soon. Took me a few years to write this chapter. In the mean time, there is my short story (follow the link in my profile) and a few Omake to tide you over.

Story notes: If I ever get to Hogwarts in this one, I don't believe I'd have the Addams children accompany Harry. It's been done and done well.

Thanks go to Dogbertcarroll who donated copious quantities of sweet brain juice to keep this story going.

Ideas by: , lucindas, polychromeknight, siaru74

Typo busted by Jenifer Winterbine

Omake: Happens to everyone at least once.

"How was school today, dear?" Morticia asked her only daughter.

"Some boys pulled on my pigtails," Wednesday replied in a monotone. "Harry blew them up."

"Smashing," Gomez cheered. "Why I remember . . ."

"Like a balloon," Wednesday interrupted. "They didn't explode."

"The poor boy," Morticia sighed. "I do hope you didn't make fun of him, he can be so sensitive."

"Happens to the best of us," Gomez said uncomfortably. "Can't always be on top of things."

"Luckily thing a murder of crows came to finish the job," Pugsley chipped in. "Shame the men in black chased them away."

Omake: Hagrid

"I see you've met Kitty," Gomez said with a wide grin. "Looks like he's taken quite a liking to you too."

"Adorable little guy," Hagrid rumbled. The half giant shot a warm glance down at the lion gnawing on his leg. "They won't let me keep one at the castle."

"That's horrible." Gomez was aghast. "What is it you do at this castle of yours?"

"Groundskeeper," Hagrid replied. "Gives me plenty of time to take care of my pets."

"What sort of animals do you keep?" Morticia asked.

"The usual," Hagrid began. "To start with, I've got . . ."

IIIIIIIIII

"I've just received a resignation letter from Hagrid," Dumbledore said in shock. "He's collecting up his pets and moving to America."

Hagrid takes Agragog and the rest back to Wednesday, she raises spiders.

Omake: Family

"Cousin Wednesday?" the odd blond girl squealed. "It's been ages."

"Cousin Luna," Wednesday said unhappily. "It's been far too short."

"How's your mother dear?" Morticia asked with a pleasant grin. "I haven't seen Ophelia since the last time we were in England."

Omake: Possible Ending

"We ignored you when you were just culling the sheep," Wednesday said in a low dangerous voice, "but did you think we would ignore it when you tried to take something that belongs to me?"

|||||||

"Back so soon, dear?" Morticia asked her daughter.

"I wanted to get back as quickly as possible." Wednesday put a jar containing a mysterious black smoke on the table.

"What's that you've brought?"

"Someone who didn't know his place," Wednesday replied.

Mini omake by Swordchucks

"Boy-Who-Lived, huh?" Wednesday asked, eying Harry speculatively.

"That's not a challenge, Wednesday," the boy in question said with a sigh.

"Are you sure about that?"

Omake by Thea\_Zare

Dark hair frazzled around her sharp featured face as she explored the almost homey old mansion she'd found herself in. 'For apparent muggles, these Addams had taste.' She wasn't quite sure how she found herself here instead of in the un-tender mercy of the dementors, but she planned on taking full advantage of it.

Suddenly she found herself face to face with a rather rotund, bald man in a turtleneck. Instantly on the offensive, she fired off a crucio, and prepared to follow it up with the killing curse. Shock brought her

casting to a halt however. Instead of writing in pain the the man was... could it be...

"Stop it, 'trixie, that tickles." He called out between giggles.

Eyes wide she turned to make a quick get away and thudded into a brick wall. At least that's what it felt like. Jumping back she cranked her head up and up and up until she was looking at what seemed to her to be some sort of giant inferi. The guttural "Uhhh" that echoed out of its throat almost seemed to agree with her mental assessment. She aimed and fired off a killing curse at the creature, who completely failed to respond in any way.

Bellatrix Lestrange found herself in the, for her, unique emotion of terror. As the behemoth in front of her groaned once more she lost all bladder control. This was almost immediately followed with a drenching of water to the face.

"Bad 'trixie, not on the rug!" The turtle necked muggle said in exasperation while tucking the seltzer bottle away again.

Omake by Stevenstirling23

"Well I'll be," muttered Hagrid as he took a good look at the Unicorn that had climbed up a tree to retreat from the first year Slytherin. "Didn't even know they could do that. Well just goes to show that you learn something new each day, don't it kids?"

"Indeed," said Wednesday as she studied the obvious half giant. While he would never win an intellectual contest, he seemed to truly care for creatures that most normal people, and most wizards for that matter, would just as soon kill then look at. It was an almost Addams like attitude, one that earned him a pinch of respect with an eye of observing him to see if he had any more interesting traits.

Disclaimer: Having worked in a hospital, let me assure you that this is tame compared to some of the things you see that can't be unseen.

Tales From The Hogwarts Hospital Wing

or

Why Poppy Pomfrey Hates Her Life!

Omake: Be Sure of Your Footing

"Good afternoon, Mr. Malfoy," Pomfrey said neutrally.

"Healer," Draco replied.

"Let me guess," Pomfrey sighed. "You slipped and fell again, didn't you?"

"Yes, Healer."

"And you just happened to land on a long and vaguely cylindrical object, right?"

"Yes, Healer."

"And some misfortune caused the afore mentioned object to go up your rectum and become lodged in your colon," Poppy said flatly.

"Exactly what happened," Draco agreed.

"Is there some reason you keep leaving long and vaguely cylindrical objects laying around on the floor?" Poppy asked as she prepared her equipment.

"Why wouldn't I?" Draco asked brazenly.

"Because history has shown that you'll eventually slip and fall on them causing them to go up your rectum," Poppy replied.

"Mere coincidences," Draco insisted.

"Five times in the last month?"

"Are you insinuating something?"

"Bend over the examination table," Poppy sighed. "Let's get this over with . . . again."

Omake: Don't Forget The Silk

"Ms. Granger," Madame Pomfrey greeted the girl. "What can I do for you?"

"Um." Hermione blushed a deep red. "Do you have anything for chafing?"

"From what and on what area?" Poppy asked as she turned to her potions cabinet."

"From dragon hide and on my nipples," Hermione replied.

"On your where?" Poppy asked.

"My nipples, Madame Pomfrey," Hermione's voice was even despite her deepening blush.

"What happened?" Poppy asked.

"My new leather corset is just a bit rougher then I thought it would be," Hermione explained.

"Of course it is," Poppy muttered to herself. It was always the quiet ones. "Here you are, Ms. Granger."

"Thank you, Madame Pomfrey."

Omake: Careful, You Don't Know Where She's Been . . . er . . .  
Baaaaeen

"What seems to be bothering you, Albus?" Madame Pomfrey asked.

"An itching and burning sensation when I use the chamber pot," the Headmaster replied.

"I see." She cast a couple of diagnostic charms. "I've found the problem, Albus," Madame Pomfrey said.

"Wonderful," Albus said cheerfully. "What is it?"

"A sexually transmitted disease," she said bluntly. "Only this one . . ."

"You can cure it, can't you?"

"I can cure it, but it's generally found in sheep. This is the first case I've ever seen it occurs in humans." Outside Aberdeen anyway.

"Sheep," Albus roared. "That cheating slut. Oh, how am I going to tell Aberforth?"

"I couldn't say," Poppy said, forcing her smile to stay on. "Take this potion three times a day for the next three weeks."

"Thank you, Poppy."

"It's my job, Albus." Unfortunately.

Omake: Don't Put That There

Ron wondered into the Hospital wing with a bit of feather sticking out his left nostril.

"Oh for heavens sake," Poppy sighed. She cast a quick, and unfortunately well practiced charm to remove the foreign object. "Another deep one, Mr. Weasley?"

"Yes, Madame Pomfrey," Ron agreed.

"What have I told you about using a quill to pick your nose?" She asked sternly.

"I didn't have a choice," Ron protested. "I was in charms class and lunch isn't for a whole thirty minutes."

"What does that . . ." the full implications of the boys words hit her. "Never mind, is there anything else you need, Mr. Weasley?"

"No, Madame Pomfrey."

"On your way, then."

Omake: Always Remember to be Considerate of Others

"Ms. Granger so good to see you again, and you've brought Mr. Potter with you this time." She hit the boy with a dozen diagnostic charms. "Who doesn't appear to have anything wrong with him for once." She crushed the urge to put him in bed three for observation, just to be sure. What seems to be the problem."

"We need something to treat chafing again, Madame Pomfrey," Hermione explained.

"Your corset again?" She sighed.

"Oh no," Hermione said quickly. "I learned my lesson after the first time and lined it with silk so it wouldn't bother any sensitive areas."

"Well . . . that's good to hear," Poppy said, trying to focus on the positives. "What sort of chafe marks?"

"Rope burns mostly," Harry replied.

"I see, and just why do you need something to treat rope burns?" Poppy knew she was going to regret asking but she just had to know.

"We were playing warden, sadistic guard, and her easily seduced assistant and I might have gotten a bit carried away playing the sadistic guard," Hermione admitted.



"I see." She wished she didn't. Poppy pulled a vial off the shelf. "Apply this to the effected area and wait for five minutes, then apply again."

"We're uh . . . we're going to need more then that, Madame Pomfrey," Harry said nervously.

"How much?"

"Enough for five girls," Harry replied. "Wrists and ankles."

Omake: Or There

Ron waddled into the Hospital Wing with a look of profound discomfort on his face.

"Mr. Weasley," Madame Pomfrey greeted the boy. "And you don't seem to have a feather sticking out your nose." A small improvement but one she was willing to celebrate. "What seems to be the problem this time?"

"I've got a stuck quill again," Ron replied.

"Really?" Damn it. "I don't see it." Ron dropped his pants, and showed her. "Just how did you get a quill stuck up your urethra?" Madame Pomfrey asked reluctantly.

"I was in Transfiguration and I had an itch," Ron explained. "My finger wouldn't fit so I used a quill."

"Of course," Madame Pomfrey sighed. "Hop on the table." She hated her life sometimes.

Omake: Why Proper Wand Maintenance is Vital to a Happy Life

"Ms. Bones, Ms. Abbott," Poppy greeted the two girls. "What seems to be the problem?"

"I've got a splinter, Madame Pomfrey," Susan replied.

"Where is it?" Poppy asked, almost overjoyed that it was something so normal.

"In my . . . uh . . . personal area," Susan said with a blush.

"I see." Poppy sighed, she should have known. "Just how did you get a splinter stuck there?"

"Apparently someone doesn't take proper care of her wand," Susan said, shooting a pointed glare at her friend.

"Sorry," Hanna said shame faced. "We normally use your wand so I didn't think . . . sorry."

"Come this way, Ms. Bones." Why oh why did she become a Healer?

Omake: Be Considerate of Others When You Have a Cold

"Ms. Lovegood." Poppy took a deep calming breath as she prepared herself for the worst. "What can I do for you today?"

"Hmmm?" Luna smiled at the Healer. "My throat's feeling a bit sore and I'm worried that I'm coming down with something."

"Oh." Poppy squelched the urge to cheer. "Have a seat while I check."

"Alright." Luna took a seat and watched as the healer cast her diagnostic charms.

"It looks like you are indeed coming down with a case of influenza," Poppy announced. She pulled a vial of potion out of her cabinet. "This should clear it right up."

"Thank you, Madame Pomfrey," Luna said gratefully.

"No problem," Poppy replied.

"Um." Luna paused as a thought occurred to her. "Was I contagious?"

"A bit," Poppy agreed.

"Would kissing someone pass it on?" Luna asked, her cheeks turned a bit pink.

"Why don't I just give you another vial for them?" Poppy suggested.

"I'll need six more vials, Madame Pomfrey," Luna interjected.

"Six?" Poppy asked weakly.

"We were playing prison warden, sadistic head guard, and her easily seduced assistant today," Luna explained.

"I see." Poppy sighed, of course it couldn't be that simple.

"I was the easily seduced assistant," Luna added happily.

Omake: On Why You Shouldn't Leave Your Golf Bag Laying Around

"Tripped and fell on another vaguely cylindrical object, Mr. Malfoy?" Poppy asked. Why did god hate her so much?

"Why ever would you think something like that?" Draco demanded.

"Because of the depressing regularity," Poppy replied. "What is it this time?"

"This time I fell on a golf ball," Draco replied with as much dignity as he could muster.

"A golf ball." That was a new one.

"Yes," Draco agreed. "And then I slipped and fell on another."

"There were two golf balls on the floor and you just happened to fall on them?"

"There were twenty golf balls on the floor," Draco said with a haughty sniff. "Some dolt knocked over my golf bag and they all fell out on the floor."

"And naturally you slipped on them and fell several times, causing them all to to up your rectum," Poppy said dully.

"Exactly what happened," Draco agreed.

"Bend over the table, Mr. Malfoy." Poppy sighed, idly wondering if it was too late to find a new career.

Addendum By David

"Here, Mr Malfoy, take this potion." Poppy sighed, idly wondering if it was too late to find a new career.

"Yum, that potion tasted like chocolate, what is it?" Draco asked.

"A muscle relaxant combined with a laxative, I suggest you be sitting on a toilet in about 15 minutes"

Omake: It's Good to Love Animals, But There is a Limit

"Severus," Poppy greeted her colleague warily.

"Poppy," the man replied stiffly.

"Another perforated colon?" Poppy asked reluctantly.

"Indeed."

"What happened this time?"

"I had just finished a brisk swim when I stepped out of the water and noticed some rare potions ingredients on the ground. Naturally, I got on all fours to gather them and that's when it happened."

"What sort of animal was it this time?" Poppy sighed.

"What do you mean, this time?" Snape demanded.

"Just that this sort of misfortune seems to happen to you with depressing regularity," Poppy replied. "I believe you slipped on the morning dew and fell on all fours last week and your robe just happened to get hiked up causing a donkey to mount you. The week before it was a bull when you were sleeping on your stomach draped over a stump."

"I see." Snape paused to consider his answer. "It was another bull, I'm starting to think that the creatures take all too much interest in me."

"Of course they do," Poppy sighed. Curse you god.

Omake: It's Not Too Late to Whip it, Whip it Good

"Mr. Potter," Poppy greeted her most frequent patient. "What is it this time?"

"I need something to heal lash marks, Madame Pomfrey," Harry replied.

"Let me see them," Poppy commanded.

"They're not on me," Harry said quickly. "Hermione got a bit too enthusiastic again and I'll need enough doses for . . ."

"Five girls, right?" Poppy asked as she began rummaging through her potions cabinet.

"Uh." Harry coughed.

"What was that?"

"Eight." Harry's blush was almost as red as Ron's hair.

Omake: At Least he's Learned his Lesson Concerning Quills

"Mr. Weasley," Poppy said dully. "Where did you get a quill stuck this time?"

"Isn't a quill, Madame Pomfrey," Ron said proudly. "I learned my lesson."

"Thank god for small mercies," Poppy muttered. Things were looking up. "What's the problem this time, then?"

In response, Ron dropped his pants.

Poppy pinched the bridge of her nose, she should have known. "Is that one of the stirring rods from Potions class?" She asked dully.

"It was the only thing on the table I thought would fit that wasn't a quill," Ron replied proudly.

"And why exactly did you jam it up your urethra?" Poppy hated herself for asking.

"I wanted to see if it would fit, of course," Ron said, shooting her a look of superiority.

"Of course," she echoed.

Omake: Working Out

"Mr. Thomas," Madame Pomfrey greeted the student.

"Just came in for some ligament cream," the boy announced. "Been lifting a lot of weights with Seamus and we're both pretty sore."

"Is that it?"

"Might have pulled a muscle," Dean admitted with a shrug. "Don't think so though."

"You didn't," she agreed after a quick check.

"About that cream?"

"Here you are." She gave him a large jar. "Will there be anything else?"

"No, Madame Pomfrey."

A smile appeared on Poppy's face, finally something normal and non-perversed.

Omake: Proper Planning

"What do you need?" Poppy sighed, why oh why did god hate her so much?

"We're going to need some birth control potions," Daphne said with a blush.

"Enough for two hundred and sixty four witches," Tracy added.

"What?" Poppy asked dully.

"Enough for two hundred and sixty four witches," Tracy repeated.

"You honestly expect me to believe that there are two hundred and sixty four witches in Mr. Potter's harem?" Poppy asked skeptically. "I don't even think there are that many in a ten mile radius of the castle."

"Actually, there are two hundred and sixty five counting yourself," Tracy said helpfully.

"So what you're telling me is that Mr. Potter is servicing every witch except for myself?"

"Yes, Madame Pomfrey."

"How many doses do you really need?" Poppy sighed.

"Forty five," Tracy sighed.

"Told you not to have such a high number," Daphne scolded.

"What's the real number then?" Poppy prompted.

"Forty five," Daphne confirmed.

"How in the world did Mr. Potter get that many girls after him?" Poppy asked in shock.

"Well," Daphne began. "It all started when Tracy and I got the idea to have a bit of fun with Potter and Granger."

"But we could never catch them alone together, finally caught Granger and Lovegood together and figured what the hell. Let's mess with the two of them."

"Our first clue that something had gone wrong was when Lovegood started clapping and muttering something about more slaves for Master Harry," Daphne said with a soft smile.

"Or it could have been the way Granger started licking her lips," Tracy added. "Anyway, long story short, the other girls found out that Granger was willing to share and we've got about fifteen regulars and several other occasional visitors."

"But why are you all focused on Mr. Potter?" Poppy asked. "There are other boys in the castle."

"Why don't we look at the top five boys in the castle?" Tracy suggested. "There's Harry."

"Mmmmm, Harry," Daphne moaned.

"Ahem," Tracy cleared her throat. "Neville . . ."

"Damn Puffs won't share him," Daphne muttered.

"Draco."

All three witches shuddered at the thought.



"Ronald," Daphne said sickly.

"And Dean . . ."

"Who's in an exclusive relationship with Seamus," Tracy added.

"Not that they'll admit it," Daphne said.

"Just say that they're very good friends."

"Who shower together, disappear into empty classrooms together, etc."

"Nothing wrong with two blokes spending time together," Tracy said in a fairly good imitation of Dean's voice.

AN: Figured that I might as well put this up. Was going to use it as a subplot in another fic, never got around to it.

Omake By kafkaexmachina

Voldemort and Wormtail discuss his years at Hogwarts around the old Riddle Manor.

"So, Wormtail..." Voldemort started.

"Yes, Master?" Wormtail grovelled.

"Why did you never attempt to contact my inner circle? I understand avoiding Severus, but still, there were others. After all, Malfoy's boy... Draco was it?... was a mere castle away."

Wormtail paled (which was, in and of itself, quite the feat) and pulled a full-body shudder. "I did, master. Once." A tear dripped down his cheek. "Poor Lemiwinks, we knew thee well..." He sobbed, clutching his head. "The horror, the horror!"

"Wormtail, if you ever tell me what happened, I will Crucio you like you've never been Crucio'd before."

Omake by tengokujin

"Mr. Longbottom, I did not expect you here."

"Uh... er... hello, Madam Pomfrey," replied Neville in a small voice.

"What can I do for you, Mr. Longbottom?" asked the only source of magical healing in a 2-mile radius.

"I... um... I've got a rash, ma'am."

"Can you tell me how you got this rash, Mr. Longbottom?" came the resigned voice of someone who knew she was going to dread the answer.

"I was... uh... handling some bubotubers without gloves and... er... my hands are in a bad way."

Madam Pomfrey blinked.

"That's it?" she asked. "Nothing about not seeing the bubotubers and placing your hand conveniently around the most volatile parts? Nothing about using them in some strange manner, leaving rashes on sensitive parts of your anatomy?"

"Err...? ... No?"

"... I see. Mr. Longbottom, come here, allow me to apply this salve. You should be fine by supper time."

Neville walked over to the school's healer, had some salve applied to his hands, and walked out, profusely thanking the relieved witch the whole while.

Minutes later, a bow-legged Susan Bones walked in.

"Madam Pomfrey? Do you have anything for bubotuber contact?"

Omake by Ghrdr

Madam Pomfrey rubbed her temples with her fingertips and sighed.

It was that time of the month again and she needed to check and make sure she had the necessary potions on hand. Skel-grow for the most part plus a healthy dose of pepper-up with a side dreamless sleep. Thinking about it for a minute she decided to add a bottle of all purpose lube because the Malfoy heir couldn't resist slipping on something.

Making her way into the ward she saw her first casualty on the first bed practicing what looked like the wand movements for the memory charm. Quickly stunning Daphne Greengrass, Madam Pomfrey shook her head as she heard the rush of students heading her way.

She'd tried again and again to tell Albus to make Severus go outside when he re-greased his hair.

Omake by meteoricshipyards

Madam Pomfrey took a sip of her tea (laced with some medicinal fortifier) and put her feet up in the Teachers' Lounge. It was the morning, and most accidents didn't happen until afternoon or evening when the students got, er, frisky.

The door opened and Hagrid came in. There was someone she had never worked with, although she thought she should. Bites from acromantulas? Vicious cuts from the claws of Manticores? All just "scratches" to him, and then he'll go off on how "harmless" the little beasties really were.

"Morning, Poppy."

"Good morning, Rubius. Quiet morning?"

"Yeah, mostly. Don't teach this morning, and the children usually don't bring their pets till lunch when they're sure they're not jus' havin' a lie-in."

"Bring their pets?"

"Yeah. Any of them hurt or sick, they bring them to me. You'd be surprised what sort of wear and tear the little tykes do to their critters."

"Probably nothing like what they do to their own bodies."

"What? Do tell!"

"Sorry, but healer/patient confidentiality keeps me from revealing what goes on, but I can say that no orifice of their bodies is free from abuse of one form or another."

"Orifice? Bah! You should see what they do to their pets. But the worse was one of the centaurs."

"Don't tell me some child has a pet centaur?"

"Not a pet, exactly. It's just she's so bloody friendly with all the critters, she can walk right up to any of them as if it were a kitten. Well, most. Fer some reason some of the centaurs don't like any humans, even Luna."

"This is the Lovegood girl?"

"That's right. Bright as a button, she is. But it would take a barbed wire fence to keep that one out of the forbidden forest; just doesn't see the danger. Anyway, the way I heard the story she was spotted goin' into the forest by some Slytherins who thought they'd have a bit o'fun with her. They followed, and I'm not quite sure what happened. . . ."

"They didn't abuse her, did they? She hasn't been to see me. Do you think they obliterated her afterward? She's such a shy thing, I doubt she would report it."

"Well, she is shy, I'll give you that, but calm? Mostly, but she does have her limits. Seems the Slytherins were taunting her when she came across Bane the Centaur who has a particular dislike for her because of her wondering the forest without asking their leave, as if

anyone needs it. But with him and the Slytherin's laying into her, she reached her breaking point."

"But what could she do against a pair of students and a full grown centaur?"

"I'm not sure, but later, when she calmed down and was pretty contrite about losing her temper, she led Bane to me to fix him up."

"She hurt him?"

"And the Slytherins. I had to extract both of them from his arse!"

Omake by tengokujin

"Mr. Goyle, Mr. Crabbe. What can I do for you now?" sighed Madam Pomfrey. She'd seen them earlier today, when they came down with a most mysterious case of broken joints and torn muscles. She really did not want to think why their respective wrists were broken and sphincters were torn, but she-

Madam Pomfrey took another draught of her special flask of her "extra-strong" calming potion.

Feeling much more mellow, she asked the mute duo again, "Mr. Goyle? Mr. Crabbe? In cloth for wholesome dragon melody. Door cuts pastry flower?"

She paused. The duo managed to look more confused.

Realizing what she had meant to say and what she had said didn't quite mesh, she took a deep, cleansing breath, gathered her thoughts once more, and asked, "Mr. Goyle, Mr. Crabbe. What do you need here?"

Satisfied she got her point across this time, she waited.

A few moments passed.

"Mr. Goyle? Mr. Crabbe?"

The duo still did not reply.

Madam Pomfrey just manage to catch herself before openly weeping into her hands. After a few more draughts and chasing after illusionary Snorkacks frolicking as if it were May Day (First of May, first of May, outdoor fu-), she managed to think of a possible reason why the two did not respond.

"Mr. Goyle, Mr. Crabbe, have you been silenced?"

After half a minute, the duo slowly nodded.

Madam Pomfrey cast a "Finite" on them.

"Will that be all, Mr. Goyle, Mr. Crabbe?"

Vincent and Gregory both brought up their broken wrists.

This time, she didn't stop herself.

Omake by Danjal

The sudden blinding headache made Poppy rush towards the calender.

"Damn," she muttered, "A months goes by way to fast. Let's hope..."

CRASH

"Nothing has happened." Poppy ended while looking resignedly towards the door to see Remus Lupin entering her hospital wing.

"Was there a problem with the Wolfsbane?" She asked while hoping this would indeed be the problem.

A shake of the head was her only answer.

"Sirius Black found his squeaky toy again and you forgot to stop chewing it when you changed back again?" Poppy tried, while trying

to figure out what she might have done wrong in another lifetime to be punished like this.

A nod of the head was her only answer.

"Very well, let's get this over with. Say Aaah."

The sudden blinding headache made Poppy rush towards the calender.

"Damn," she muttered, "A months goes by way to fast. Let's hope..."

CRASH

"Nothing has happened." Poppy ended while looking resignedly towards the door to see Remus Lupin and Sirius Black entering her hospital wing.

"Was there a problem with the Wolfsbane?" She asked while hoping this would indeed be the problem.

Two shaking heads was her only answer.

"Sirius Black found his squeaky toy again after already buying another and you forgot to stop chewing it when you changed back again, while Black started laughing and thereby lodging it in his mouth, again" Poppy sighed, wondering how many deities she could have possibly pissed of in another lifetime.

Two nodding heads was her only answer.

"Very well, let's get this over with. Say Aaah."

The sudden blinding headache made Poppy rush towards the calender.

"Damn," she muttered, "A months goes by way to fast. Let's hope..."

CRASH

"Nothing has happened." Poppy ended while looking resignedly towards the door to see Remus Lupin entering her hospital wing.

"Was there a problem with the Wolfsbane?" She asked while hoping this would indeed be the problem.

A shake of the head was her only answer.

"Sirius Black found his squeaky toy again and you forgot to stop chewing it when you changed back again?" Poppy tried.

A shake of the head was her only answer.

"Then what is the problem?" Her mental equilibrium getting dangerously out of balance.

"I've got a splinter in my finger."

Years later scientists would conclude this sequence of events sparked the formation of the worlds most lethal, sadistic and horrifying reign of the Dark Lady known as The Doctor. On a positive note, those same scientists noted that a golden age for personal hygiene and general appreciation of health care practitioners started.

Omake by Dark King: Ravenclaw ingenuity can be dangerous

"Good Morning, Miss Chang," Poppy said, already dreading this visit, "what seems to be the trouble today?"

"Er...what have you got for abrasions?" The nervous girl asked.

/This is new,/ thought Pomfrey, /maybe a normal injury for once?/

"I have several possible treatments, depending on the location. Can you tell me where the injury is?"

"Um...well...it's kind of...um...personal."

Poppy's calm exterior did a superb job of hiding the near nervous breakdown she was having internally.



"What happened, Miss Chang?"

"Well, I was missing Cedric a lot, so Marietta researched some old spells and..."

short scene break

"OK, Miss Chang, I think I've heard enough. Drink this potion, and avoid...exercising...the affected area for 2 weeks. And if you ever create a golem that is an exact replica of Cedric Diggory again, don't use sandstone."

Unrelated Omake by Me

Omake: A Shepherd's Resignation

Harry was sitting in his usual place in the Great Hall when the Prophet arrived, pandemonium soon followed.

"You can't do this, Harry," one of the Ravenclaws screamed. "You can't."

Harry decided against replying, choosing instead to focus on his lunch.

"Silence," Dumbledore punctuated his command with a loud crack and a flash of light from the tip of his wand. "Care to explain yourself, Harry?"

"Was my letter to the Prophet not clear enough?" The boy asked softly.

"It says here that . . ."

"It says I'm willing to let bygones be bygones, Voldemort can have this whole rotting hulk." Harry looked around. "There's nothing here worth saving, I've got no reason to fight."

"He killed your parents," a fifth year Hufflepuff pointed out.

"I killed him," Harry replied. "Twice."

"You can't be serious, Harry." Dumbledore looked down at the boy in disappointment. "What would your parents think?"

"Judging by the examples I've had, they'd think; thank god our son isn't going to have anything to do with that madman," Harry said without looking up. "Very few parents want their fifteen year old children to fight in a war, I'm not sure I'd want anything to do with the ones that would."

"They'd want you to stand up for what you believe in," McGonagall said quickly.

"I am." Harry looked up at his head of house. "I'm standing up for myself. I'm telling you lot that you're going to have to stand on your own from now on."

The castle's inhabitance shared fear filled glances.

"Besides," Harry continued. "Didn't the Prophet print a story about how I was a delusional boy trying to get attention yesterday?"

"They're leading with a story in which they admit that they may have been mistaken today," Dumbledore said dryly.

"Bully for them." Harry speared another link of sausage. "Pity it was a day too late."

"You'd really abandon your friends like that?" Dumbledore asked sadly.

"I'd really give my friends a bit of advanced notice so they could get out of the castle before you lot had the bright idea of using them for hostages." Harry grinned. "I'd have gone with them but I had to see your reactions in person." He took one last look around. "The offer I put in the paper is so simple even you lot should be able to figure it out. He leaves me and mine alone, I leave him and his alone."

"What about us?"

"You?" Harry laughed. "I wash my hands of you." His smile widened as he activated his portkey. To hell with the sheep, let the wolves have them.

Omake: Fun with Latin

Hermione was exasperated, she really didn't know why she was arguing with Luna Lovegood of all people. Maybe it was her inability to let things go?

"Utinam logica falsa tuam philosophiam totam suffodiant!" Luna retorted smugly.

Hermione went blank for a few minutes as she did a quick mental translation. "No it doesn't."

"If you can't reply in Latin, then yes it does," Luna giggled.

"Luna, you can't just . . ."

"Te audire no possum. Musa sapientum fixa est in aure." The girl interrupted.

"What's going on?" Harry asked as he entered the conversation.

"Hermione was just showing off the gaps in her education," Luna chirped.

"Luna, you . . . I . . . ohhhh," Hermione sputtered.

"Magister Mundi sum!" Luna announced in triumph. "Harry?"

"Yes, Luna?"

"Futuere me?"

"What?"

"Vah! Denuone Latine loquebar? Me ineptum. Interdum modo elabatur," She giggled.

Omake: Another Version

by tildesmoo

C/O tengokujin

"Logica falsa totam tuam philosophiam suffodiant!" Luna retorted smugly.

Hermione went blank for a few minutes as she did a quick mental translation.

"No, it doesn't."

"If you can't reply in Latin, then yes, it does," Luna giggled.

"Luna, you can't just..."

"Te audire no possum. Musa sapientum in aure fixa est," the girl interrupted.

"What's going on?"

"Hermione was just showing off the gaps in her education," Luna chirped.

"Luna, you... I... ohhhh," Hermione sputtered.

"Magistrix mundi sum!" Luna announced in triumph. "Harry?"

"Yes, Luna?"

"Me defutere?"

"What?"

"Vah! Denuone Latinam loquebar? Inepta sum. Interdum accidet."

Disclaimer: Tried to read it, made my eyes bleed so I ended up making a couple dozen changes. Don't just make a wish-

## Take a Wish

Harry endured the ride from the station in stoic silence. Sirius was dead, and Lily Potter's boy was completely screwed if the prophecy had any substance.

Hell, he was screwed even if the Prophecy had as much substance as the rest of the fraud's blathering since Voldemort was dumb enough to be taken in by it, which explained why the Most Dangerous Dark Lord (MDDL) in recent history was gunning for him. Harry had been lucky a number of times, unfortunately Voldemort only had to be lucky once.

"Bugger this!" Harry barked. "Let me out here."

"What?" Vernon growled.

"Would you rather dump me by the side of the road and forget about me or take me home and spend the summer with me?" Harry asked.

The car screeched to a halt. "Get out."

"Knew you'd see it my way," Harry said cheerfully. He unloaded his trunk and owl. "Hope we never see each other again."

"Feeling is mutual," Vernon grunted.

"Then you might want to take your time getting home," Harry suggested. "More time before they notice I'm missing means less chance of us being mutually disappointed."

Vernon's response was to peel away from the curb and nearly clip a pedestrian in his hurry to get away.

"You know, Hedwig someday, I'm going to piss on his grave."

"Preck."

"You too, huh?"

Harry raised his wand and was rewarded by the appearance of a double decker bus.

"Welcome to the day bus," the conductor said loudly. "Discrete transport for the budget minded wizard."

"One to Diagon." Harry held out a handful of change. "This enough?"

"It is, lad," the conductor agreed. "We'll be there in a jiff."

A jiff, it turned out, was four and a half minutes. Two jiffs later, and Harry was in front of a teller.

"What do you want?" the goblin growled.

"Planning a trip abroad so I need a way to access my account for whatever the local currency is," Harry replied.

"Key," the goblin barked.

"Here you are."

The goblin rummaged through a small chest on his desk for several minutes before pulling out a small pouch. "This pouch will draw coins directly from your account and if you tap it three times with your wand then it will change into a muggle wallet which will allow you to draw the appropriate muggle currency. Will that be all?"

"I'll also need all of my transactions to be kept private." Harry hardened his features. "I do not want anyone finding out about any of my purchases."

"Of course not!" The goblin seemed mildly offended. "We pride ourselves on our confidentiality unless we're slipped a hefty bribe."

"How hefty?"

"Really hefty, and we'll cut you in for fifty percent."

"Seventy five," Harry said automatically.

"Sixty five, and we'll give them false information if you're willing to drop to sixty."

"Deal," Harry agreed.

"That all you needed?"

"I believe so," Harry agreed.

"Then get out, you're blocking the line."

Resisting the urge to smirk, Harry turned and slowly made his way towards the exit, hopeful that his plan to have an enjoyable summer would result in his first enjoyable summer ever.

From Gringotts, Harry made his way to the 'Ye Olde Travel Shoppe' which was a small specialty shop for wizards and witches intending to spend time abroad. It also had what appeared to be a line of bizarre sex toys proudly displayed in the window. Harry thought it best not to enquire about them.

He heard a faint ringing sound as he opened the door and he looked around for the shop keeper.

"What can I do for you?" An old man approached. "Want a little something to spice up your love life? I've got just the thing for a boy your age, recommended personally by Hogwarts' own Severus Snape." The man reached under the counter. "Got a picture of him using it down here somewhere."

"NO!" Harry took a deep breath. "That won't be . . . I'm planning to do a bit of traveling."

"Ah." The old man smiled with understanding. "Just graduated from one of the magic schools and now you want to go on a grand tour?"

"Something like that," Harry agreed.

"Then I have just the thing for you," the old man replied enthusiastically. "We call it the Devastator. Your girlfriend won't miss you a bit if you leave this baby behind to keep her company." The man pulled out a large cylindrical object the size of Harry's forearm. "Let me show you all the settings . . ."

"Actually," Harry interrupted. "I was hoping for some travel gear."

"Travel gear?" the man asked dumbly.

"Yes," Harry agreed.

"That a euphemism for one of the odd sex acts you kids like these days?"

"No, it means I want to travel around and . . . maybe it'd be best if I just went somewhere else."

"Wait! Sorry, kid, just don't get much call for travel gear. Almost had to close the shop till I got the idea to start my other product line," the shopkeeper said quickly. "Got plenty of travel gear here, in fact, I think I've got just what you need."

"Oh?"

"Yep, my patented ultimate backpackers' kit has everything the young wanderer could ask for, a large multi compartment leather, frame pack, charmed to be light as a feather which you'll need since it'll also hold more than a thousand times more than it looks like it should."

"Really?" Harry began to take an interest. "What else?"

"It comes with a portable stove, cookware, a tent, sleeping bag and much more," the shop keep was really getting into it. "Everything you need to travel anywhere from the tropics to the top of Mt Everest, this pack has it all."



"Wow." Harry was mildly impressed. "What else would you recommend for someone who was planning to drift around?"

"The pack contains all of the essentials but there are several items that I can recommend to make life more pleasant in addition to the pack." The old man looked at Harry's ragged appearance. "Such as my complete line of . . ."

"No," Harry interrupted. "Just no."

"How about some new clothing, something to help you with other languages, a guide book, my . . ."

"How bout you just give me everything you'd recommend and a portkey out of here?" Harry suggested.

"No problems kid. Might want to put these things on before you go." The shopkeeper put several items on the table. "These glasses will adjust to any prescription, and in addition to many other things, allow you to read any language. This silver hoop goes in either ear and converts any language you hear into English, this ring goes on whichever hand you use to write with and allows you to write any language, and finally this small bar of silver goes through your tongue and magically contorts your mouth to allow you to speak any language, in time and with enough use they will eventually teach you the languages that you use. This book." The man indicated a book entitled 'Everything you will Ever Need to Know while Traveling around the World'. "Is full of useful information and . . . I would recommend that you read the warnings in the front about underage magic before you do anything else, and this set of clothing will magically alter its self to whatever is needed for whatever climate you are in, it has charms to be self-cleaning and self-repairing and it can change colors and styles with a thought."

"There's one more thing I'd like to get..." Harry paused, trying to think of the best way to phrase it.

"I think I know just what you want," the man agreed with a lewd wink.

"Not that!" Harry said quickly. "I was wondering if you had an item that would allow me to . . . blend in better?"

"Want to immerse yourself in the culture huh?" The storeowner nodded his head. "Got just the thing, this bracelet creates a powerful SEP field around you and it will help you remained unnoticed unless you commit an aggressive or incredibly strange act."

"Thanks." Harry gave a relived smile. "About that portkey?"

"Here you go lad." The man handed Harry a small stone.

"Thanks. Uh . . . you don't happen to have quill and some parchment I could use, do you? Mine is in the trunk I just loaded into the pack."

"Here you go, kid." The man handed the items over.

Harry crossed out the obscene letterhead before writing a short note and attaching the parchment to Hedwig's leg.

"Stay with Hermione this summer, girl," Harry ordered.

"Preck?" Puppydog eyes from an owl was one of the stranger things Harry had experienced since he'd entered the wizarding world.

"It's just, I'm not sure I'll be able to get a lot of bacon this summer and Hermione told me her dad likes to eat it every morning so . . ."

Hedwig had heard enough. She hopped off Harry's shoulder and soared through the shopkeeper's window and off to the land of morning bacon.

"Sorry about that," Harry said. "How much do I owe you?"

"Don't worry about it Harry." The man smiled at Harry's shocked look. "Consider it a belated thanks for looking out for us and an apology for believing dreck printed in the Prophet. Portkey is untraceable and it will take you to Holland right about . . ." Harry disappeared. "Now. Hope you have fun in the red light district." And he hoped the girls enjoyed the full selection of stock he'd included in Harry's travel kit.

|||||||

Pandemonium would best word to describe the scene outside number 4 Privet Drive when the Dursleys arrived without Harry, followed closely by chaos and despair. Not one of the many Order guards thought to do anything but blame the other guards for quite some time, a consequence of the competent members having a mysterious other responsibility called a job. And so it was several minutes before Albus Dumbledore arrived with a retinue of people that could count higher than ten without removing their shoes and higher than twenty without removing their trousers.

"The Dursleys say that he had them drop him off in London, Professor," one of the Order members reported to the Headmaster. "Says that he didn't want to stay with them and decided to just leave."

"I found something in their car that was handled by Harry." Remus Lupin ran up brandishing a small paper pamphlet. "Its got his scent all over it."

"Thank you, Remus." The Headmaster accepted the small pamphlet. "I believe it's time I went and had a chat with Harry's friends about his whereabouts."

The Headmaster appeared before a small upper-class suburban home and rang the doorbell once; twice, three times, aha aha aha!

"Hello?" A good looking woman answered the door, she gave the old wizard a once over. "I'm afraid we're not interested in joining your religion." She slammed the door shut and Dumbledore heard her engage the dead bolt.

"Fetch, Minerva," he whispered to one of his lackeys.

"Yes, Headmaster," the lackey agreed.

The Deputy Headmistress arrived a few minutes later and was able to clear up the misunderstanding with a minimum of fuss.

"Greetings. I am the Headmaster at Hermione's school and I was wondering if I could speak with her," he said in what he thought was a firm and powerful voice.

The woman shot McGonagall a look of naked skepticism.

"He really is," Minerva whispered to Hermione's mother.

"I suppose it couldn't hurt," the woman agreed. "So long as Minerva is there to act as chaperone of course."

"Of course," Albus echoed.

"Professor Dumbledore," a bushy headed young woman called from atop a stair case. "I'm glad that you got my letter, but I didn't expect to see you this soon."

"You invited him?" Her mother sighed, she was going to have to have a serious talk with the girl later.

"I'm afraid that I didn't get any letter Ms. Granger," Dumbledore replied. "What was the problem?"

"I got a strange note from Harry that I thought you should know about," the intelligent young witch said in a tone conveying deep concern for her friend. "And I was hoping that you would check to see if he was doing okay."

"I'm afraid that I can not provide you with the assurances that I wish I could," Dumbledore said, taking a deep breath. "Harry had his uncle drop him off somewhere in London, and he has been missing for several hours."

"You don't think he got captured do you?" Hermione squeaked.

"Rest assured that I've had no information that would lead me to that conclusion." The Headmaster reached into his robes and pulled out the worn pamphlet that had been found by Remus Lupin. "I'm afraid the only clue we have is this brochure that we found in his relatives' car."

"May I see that Professor?" Hermione took the pamphlet gently. "This looks like a standard handout from one of the charity organizations that were in the Muggle Portion of King's Cross."

"Why do you think that Harry kept it?"

"Well, this particular charity tries to help sick children and . . ." The pretty young witch paled. "Harry must think he's going to die."

"What do you mean by that Ms. Granger?" the Headmaster demanded. "What leads you to that conclusion?"

"This belongs to the 'Make A Wish Foundation' they do things to bring happiness to terminally ill children." Hermione brandished the pamphlet. "Harry must have learned something that makes him think that he doesn't have much time left to live."

"I see." The Headmaster's shoulders dropped. "So you believe that's why he chose not to return to live with his family?"

"He must want to make the most of the time he has left," Hermione said, holding back tears. "Not to spend it with people he hates."

"Hates? Surely you're overstating things."

"I said what I mean," Hermione barked. "Why did you put him with those people anyway?"

"I did what I thought was best at the time." He sighed. "Thank you, you've been most helpful." The Headmaster gave Hermione a sad smile and disappeared with a faint pop.

After Dumbledore's disappearance, Hermione ran up to her room and reread the short note that had been sent along with Hedwig, clutching it to her chest she let the tears fall and hoped for the safe return of her best friend.

Hermione,

Please look over Hedwig this summer.

Harry

P.S.

Don't ever go shopping for travel supplies in Diagon Alley.

|||||

Harry's hand immediately went to his wand after the tug of the portkey disappeared. It hadn't ended well the last time he had a surprise portkey activation so it's understandable why he was a bit jumpy.

"Welcome to Amsterdam kid," a man in a strange uniform greeted him with a smile.

"Hello." Harry put his wand in his pocket and took a couple deep breaths.

"Papers?" The man held out his hand expectantly.

"Um, just a moment," Harry stammered, trying to stall for time as he tried to figure out what to do. "I know I have them here somewhere."

"Take your time." The man's demeanor became decidedly colder as he began to regard Harry with suspicion.

"One second." Harry reached into his new pack, trying to think of some way to keep his vacation from ending before it began. Within seconds, his fingers brushed up against a small leather booklet. Pulling it out, Harry looked at it dumbly, trying to figure out what it was.

"Thank you, sir." The man carefully took the small booklet out of Harry's hands and began examining it. "Oh, I'm sorry Mr. Black, I didn't realize that you were stalling out of embarrassment."

"Yes, well I . . ." Harry replied eloquently.

"No need to say a thing," the man said as he stamped several pages in the small book. "I understand what it's like to have an odd name and none need know anything but your last name."

"Thanks." Harry took his Passport back and resisted the urge to ask what in the hell the customs agent was talking about. "You wouldn't happen to know a good place to stay the night would you?"

"Tourist information outside and to the left, you can't miss it."

"Thanks again," Harry replied. "And have a good day."

"You as well, Mr. Black." The Customs Agent gave him one last grin before waving him through the gates.

The second that he was out of the Customs Agent's sight, Harry pulled out the small leather covered booklet that had been identified as his Passport and opened it to see what had drawn the man's attention. It took several seconds of examination before he found it under the name section.

Apparently he was named 'Nothrri Hez Padamus Da Grim Nomed Black,' it was also apparent that the salesman back in Diagon Alley knew entirely too much, and had a rather 'odd' sense of humor.

"Least he didn't name me after his bloody toys," Harry mumbled to himself, even if the name 'The Devastator™' did sound a bit cool.

Tourist information told him how to get into town and once in town, it only took Harry about five minutes to find the hotel and get himself a room. Walking over to his bed he prepared to take a short nap before going out to explore the world, then he remembered the salesman's advise to read the first page of the book. Pulling it out, he flipped to the warning and began to read.

A warning to parents with school aged children:

It is a little known fact that the tracking charms placed by the various governments on the wands of underage children are only effective in their

country of origin. This means that if the tracking charm was cast in England then your child could perform underage magic in any country besides England without fear of being caught. This problem is further exasperated by the Ignotus charm which can be used to remove tracking charms from a tracked wand. This problem is not insurmountable and so long as your child does not learn and perform the Dolus charm, then your child's wand can be checked regularly by any number of detection spells to insure that they have not removed the tracking charms. If however your child does perform the Dolus charm on their wand after performing the Ignotus charm, then there is no known way that their wand can be accurately checked for the absence of the Ministry mandated tracking charms because of the fact that the Dolus charm will give out a false positive and prevent the application of any new tracking charms.

For information purposes only, the proper wand movements and incantations for both the Ignotus and Dolus charms are provided below. You may also note that at the beginning of each country section a list of restricted and illegal spells is provided along with a list of useful spells, also for information purposes only.

Harry blinked for a few moments as the knowledge sunk in and a smirk appeared on his face as he realized why the shopkeeper had insisted that he read the warning in the beginning of the book before he did anything else. Not a day into his summer holiday and things were already beginning to look up.



Placing his book back into his pack, Harry stretched out on his bed for a few hours of sleep. After all, even a socially deprived kid who was raised in a cupboard knows that it's best to explore Amsterdam at night.

In the Red-Light District, Harry found himself overwhelmed by the sights, the smells, the lights, and the people.

Peeking into one of the many windows, taught Harry more about human anatomy than had been taught by Ron's older brothers and his twenty minute stroll had taught him more about the world than he had learned from the rest of his years combined.

Face red and head spinning with new experiences; Harry beat a hasty retreat to the relative safety of hotel room, deciding that maybe it would be best to explore during the day, allowing himself the luxury of easing into the night life.

Awaking early the next morning, Harry dressed himself and walked down to the hotel's lobby.

"Good morning," he greeted a pair of Swedish backpackers.

"Hello," the two Swedish girls replied, grinning at the confused look on his face. "First time in Amsterdam?"

"Yes it is, everything is just so . . ."

"Yes it can be a bit overwhelming can't it?" Swedish girl number two agreed. "We've been here several times and we still find it a bit overwhelming at times."

"If you've been here several times, then what do you suggest I do?" Harry asked the buxom twosome.

"Why don't you go down to one of the coffee shops and get some brownies," Swedish girl number one suggested with a wink.

"Thanks," Harry said. "I could do with something sweet right now."

Waving goodbye to his two new friends, Harry walked across the street to one of Amsterdam's infamous coffee shops.

"Good morning," the Barista greeted him. "What can I get for you today?"

"Some girls recommended that I try some of your brownies."

"Alright." The man nodded cheerfully. "Anything to drink?"

"Could I get a cup of tea with milk?" At the man's nod, Harry continued, "Add the tea to the milk and don't stir."

"Just take a seat and I'll have it right out."

Nodding in understanding, Harry found himself a seat in one of the corner tables. After a short amount of time, the barista came out with a tray containing a large mug of tea and a plate full of brownies.

"Enjoy." The man gave Harry a knowing wink before returning to his place behind the counter.

Taking his first tentative bite of the baked goods, Harry was surprised at how good it tasted, chocolaty with a hint of something that he couldn't identify.

He felt a strange sort of calm fall over his body as he ate and sipped his tea; for the first time that he could remember he felt relaxed, he felt like a normal person, he felt like none of his problems mattered anymore.

After several hours and several cups of tea, Harry rose to his feet and walked out of the coffee shop intent on finding some lunch at the restaurant on the other side of the avenue. Moments after Harry found his table the peace of the day was shattered by the sounds of a four incoming Apparations.

Figuring that the Order had found him and that his vacation had come to an end, Harry looked out the large picture window and was

shocked to see the street filled not with Order members, but with figures in black robes and white masks.

"We know you're here Potter!" one of the masked figures called out. "Come out and none of these muggles have to get hurt."

A couple of the others were amusing themselves by torturing one of the 'presumably' innocent bystanders.

Harry took a deep breath. This was it, another battle against impossible odds, another chance to . . . his eyes widened in shock. Suspended above the bunched up Death Eaters was a rather large piano, supported only by a thick hemp rope. A quick severing charm took care of the rope and gravity was kind enough to take care of the rest.

And after summoning their wands and hitting them each with a couple insurance stunners, he cautiously approached the crushed figures.

Walking around the puddle and up to the apparent leader of the detachment who'd been 'lucky' enough to have been far enough away from the rest of the group to survive, Harry removed the man's shattered mask and spent a few minutes examining the man's crushed face. The steady rise and fall of the bastard's chest let Harry know that he had at least one survivor.

"Enervate," Harry incanted. "What exactly was your purpose here?"

"I'm not saying a thing," the Death Eater growled defiantly, the effects of the previous stunner dulling the pain to the point that the man had yet to feel his injuries. "I know my rights and you can't force me to do a thing."

"That's not strictly true," Harry replied. "You see, I am not an employee of any magical government."

"So?"

"So look around and consider this; until a representative of the Dutch Ministry arrives, I get to play with you all I want. Now talk!" Harry ordered.

"Y-you can't do this," the Death Eater sobbed. "You're one of the good guys."

"No," Harry disagreed. "I'm just a guy on vacation. Now do you want to survive to be turned over to law enforcement or not?"

"We were here to capture Harry Potter."

"How did you find him?" Harry asked.

"One of the Dark Lord's followers at Hogwarts placed a tracking charm on the boy in an attempt to find out where he lives over the summer. I guess that muggle loving Headmaster of his didn't bother to check his golden boy."

"Stupefy." Harry looked down at the Death Eater in disgust, it appeared that Tom had been recruiting; it also appeared that he hadn't managed to get any competent new followers. It further appeared that someone had better get there soon to hit the man with a couple clotting charms before he bled out.

"Staatstovenaars stay where you are." Several wizards in official looking robes approached with wands drawn. "Slowly place your wand on the ground and then put your hands up."

"I would rather not put my wand on the ground," Harry was careful not to make any sudden movements, "one of these morons might be playing dead and I would rather not give him my wand." Not to mention the fact that it was a bitch to get blood stains out of wood.

"Slowly hold your wand by the tip and hold it above your head," an intimidating looking witch commanded. "Then walk towards me."

"Alright," Harry agreed. "I don't suppose that you'd believe me if I were to tell you that I didn't have anything to do with this?"

"I'd find that very hard to believe," the witch agreed.

"Alright, but I only had a little to do with this?"

"I'm not going to buy that either," she replied with a grin.

"I suppose saying that they some how managed to crush themselves is right out, huh?" Harry sighed, there went his vacation.

"Just give me your wand," the witch laughed. "And bear in mind that my partners will turn you into a puddle to match theirs™ if you try anything."

"I'll be good," Harry agreed.

The witch relaxed quite a bit after he had taken Harry's wand. "Now sir, if I could take your statement?"

"Sure." Harry nodded and then added hopefully, "I don't suppose that you could take my statement while I got something to eat?"

"You've still got an appetite after what happened?" she asked incredulously.

"So long as you aren't with them," the man motioned towards the death eaters, "then I don't care if you give your statement standing on your head Mr.?"

"Black, I'm not." Harry gave his most charming smile. "May I lower my arms, they're starting to cramp."

"You may," the woman said. "I am Staatstovenaar Annie Van Der Mijer. Could you tell me what happened here?".

"Well, I was just sitting down for lunch when they appeared." Harry motioned towards the fallen Death Munchers. "They made a couple threats and used a couple unforgivables, so I took care of them."

"Did you have any assistance?" Staatstovenaar Van Der Mijer asked quickly.

"No, not unless you count gravity," Harry joked.

"There were four of them, how did you manage to get all of them yourself?" Her voice was tinged with a bit of awe.

"What we have here is the absolute worst that Voldemort has in his service. I managed to win because I had surprise, luck, and physics on my side," Harry explained.

"I see," the woman said slowly. "Do you have anything else to add?"

"The leader said something about using a tracking charm to hunt someone." Harry grimaced. "And being the suspicious sort that I am, I was wondering if you would be willing to check me for such a charm and if necessary remove it?"

"Of course." The woman performed several complex wand movements. "You were correct, you did have such a spell but I do not believe that it was placed by a Death Eater."

"Why not?"

"It was rather amateurishly done; I'd say that whoever placed it couldn't be out of school."

"Thank you," Harry said. "Probably just a prank then, but one can never be too careful."

"I agree, find a seat, and if the other witnesses corroborate your story then your wand will be returned and you will be free to go," she said.

"Even with three dead?"

"Death Eaters and self defense," she replied.

"Thank you," Harry said politely. "May I ask you one question?"

"You may."

"Are these attacks common in The Netherlands?"

"No," she said quickly, the woman paused to think. "I believe that this is only the second in the last twenty years, normally they confine their activities to the UK."

"Thank you, with luck, it will be another twenty years before you have to deal with another."

"I'd rather we never have to deal with another," the woman replied. "If you will just wait here for a moment, I'd just like converse with my colleagues for a moment before we continue."

"Sure thing." Harry took a seat on the curb.

The woman favored Harry with one last smile then she walked out of earshot to another group of Staatstovenaars. "Well?"

"The witnesses all agree that a group of men in black robes appeared and began yelling something about something in English." The man checked his notes. "The man Black came out of the cafe and attacked, he then walked up to the fallen Death Eaters and hit them with a red light, and then we arrived. All told it sounds like the fight was over in ten seconds or less."

"Alright," the woman agreed. "What else?"

One of the other Staatstovenaar pulled out his note book. "Each of the suspects suffered massive blunt force trauma, looks like they were down before they even had time to fight back." He glanced at Harry. "Whoever this guy is, he doesn't like to play around."

Staatstovenaar Van Der Mijer took out her own notebook. "We have a male of unknown nationality and age that by his own account defeated four Death Eaters before they had a chance to cast a single spell at him, though in his professional opinion was that they were new recruits. He speaks perfect Dutch with a Haarlem accent, and, the woman paused, "and he has an unknown magical effect that makes it difficult for me to give a description. Any ideas on who we're dealing with here?"

"Whoever he is, he's good." One of the men bit his lower lip. "I know most of the Staatstovenaars in The Netherlands, so maybe an experienced Staatstovenaar from another country?"

"I disagree," one of the others said, shaking his head. "I can count on one hand the people who are good enough to do something like this, and most of them are missing so many body parts that they couldn't be him even under heavy disguise."

"And the ones that aren't?" Van Der Mijer asked quietly.

"Had their minds shattered by over exposure to the Cruciatus Curse," the Staatstovenaar finished sadly. "Whoever he is, wherever he came from, I can't say."

"I see," Van Der Mijer sighed. "I'll go talk to him and get more of a statement, maybe he'll let something slip."

"I wouldn't count on it," her partner said. "Men like him don't make mistakes."

"Then wish me luck," she said over her shoulder as she began walking towards the enigmatic Mr. Black.

"Well?" Harry asked.

"Your story checks out," she said. "If you want, we can go to a restaurant where you can get something to eat and I can get a more detailed statement."

"Fine," Harry agreed. "Is there anywhere around here that you would suggest we go?"

"Would you prefer wizard or non?"

"Either is fine," Harry replied. "So long as it tastes good and there's a lot of it."



"Then I would suggest we go over to the magical section of Kalverstraat, they've got a restaurant that claims they will serve anything the customer can think of."

"Sounds fine, is it far from here?"

"Just around the corner."

"Then let's go," Harry said, eager to finally get his lunch, he'd been feeling unusually hungry since he'd finished those brownies.

Harry followed the Dutch Law Enforcement Officer through a series of twists and turns until they came to a small cafe in the mouth of a street that branched off the main.

"Here we are," she said.

"Great." Harry looked at the cafe with approval. "Let's find a table."

"Please follow me," the waiter announced his presence. "Will you be requiring a menu?"

"No thank you." Harry waved the man off. "I'll be ready to order in a few minutes, to start with though could you bring me something to drink?"

"Right away, sir"

"I'm afraid that I don't know much about Dutch Food," Harry said. "What would you suggest I order?"

"I've always liked the Limburgs Zuurvlees," the woman responded after a moment of contemplation.

"Thank you, and feel free to order something for yourself."

"Thank you."

After a short wait, the waiter had taken their orders and the curious Staatstovenaar pulled out her notebook, eager to get her questions answered.

"So, Mr. Black, what made you think that those Death Eaters were new recruits?"

"Experience." Harry took a sip of his drink. "I've faced several members of the inner circle and each one of them would have been quicker to throw curses." Harry laughed. "Voldemort has very few followers that are anything more than low grade thugs, even his inner circle attempts to substitute sadism for skill and the four I faced didn't even measure up to that low standard."

"I see." The woman attempted to hide her surprise. "Do you think that we'll see more of them?"

"I don't know," Harry replied. "My guess would be that they were not working on an official mission, so there is a good chance that Volde won't care what happened to them."

"Why do you think that?"

"It sounded as if they were hunting someone. An official hunting party would be commanded by a high ranking Death Muncher, for an important target it would be a member of the inner circle," Harry lectured. Stopping when the waiter returned with the food and waited until the man was out of earshot. "The leader of this group was a low level flunky; my guess was that they were on an operation of their own in hopes of eliminating the target on their own in some misguided attempt to curry favor with their master."

"I see." Definitely a professional, the woman thought to herself. "I noticed that you started out with lethal force and only used a stunner after the Death Eaters were down?"

"Yes I did," Harry agreed. "Another lesson I learned the hard way is that a stunner is rather easy to counter, but broken bones and crushed skulls keeps your opponent down."

"I'll keep that in mind. Just who are you Mr. Black?"

"I'm just a guy on a vacation to try to find something he's never had," Harry replied.

"And what's that?"

"Life."

AN: I've got two problems with the fic as it is now. The first is that it's missing the underling idea that Harry's given up. In the first version, I had a lot of 'sad smile' which was not good writing in my opinion. The second is that I'm not sure about the Piano scene, I like it but I don't think it's first chapter material. Also hated the oil scene so I'd have to figure out something else.

Announcements: Look in my profile and you'll find the link to anthology that has a short story by me. It's the first story in the book and you can get a lot of it for free if you've got some way of reading Kindle files.

Thanks go to dogbertcarrol for a lot of editing.

Typos by: sv\_bunga, stratagemini, several by Jenifer Winterbine, Rick – DEL, Howard.

Missing line pointed out by: oathsblood

Thanks go to Finbar for providing me with a lot of suggestions and information on back packing around Europe. And Roos AKA Aria-Chan who gave me a lot of info on the Netherlands.

Disclaimer: Disclaimer me this, disclaimer me that, who's afraid of a great big bat?

## Sympathy For The Devil

A grin cut across Snape's face as the students took their seats, the moment had come. It was the one bright spot in his life, the one thing that had given him the strength to carry on, the one moment he had waited for since being forced to take the accursed job.

"Potter," Snape barked. "What would I get if I added powdered root of asphodel to an infusion of wormwood?"

"I . . . I don't know, sir," the boy stammered. It was music to his ears, balm to sooth his battered soul.

"Very well." Snape sneered. "Where . . ." The boy looked up and Snape froze, entranced for a moment by his eyes, by Lily's eyes. "Let's try this again, how would you prepare Troll spleen for a wit sharpening potion?" He felt ill, those eyes had no place on James Potter's son, had no place on the boy that should have been his.

"I don't know that one either, sir," Harry admitted.

"Why don't we try one last time?" Severus smiled as a plan began to form. He would steal James Potter's son. "What is the difference between monkshood and wolfsbane?" He would set things right, he would have his vengeance.

"I don't know," Harry sighed.

"Very well. Ms. Granger, you've had your hand up for quite some time. Why don't you try answering the first question?"

"The draught of living death, sir," Hermione answered with a smile.

"Very good, but do not raise your hand in the future unless you have a question or I am asking the class. Is that understood?"

"Yes, sir," Hermione agreed.

"Mr. Malfoy, the second question if you please."

"I would dice the first half and mince the second," Draco replied.

"Excellent," Snape agreed. "And finally, why don't we have . . . Mr. Longbottom answer the last question."

"They're both plants in the Aconitum family," Neville said. "Monkshood can refer to several different plants but wolfsbane refers to Aconitum vulparia."

"Bravo." Snape clapped his hands. "I see you inherited your mother's considerable interest in plants."

"Yes, sir," Neville agreed shyly.

"Take ten points for Gryffindor for your unusually thorough answer." He let his gaze sweep over the class. "All three answers could be found in the first three chapters of the text book and in the future I expect every student here to do the reading before you come to my class. Is that understood?"

"Yes, sir," the class agreed.

"Good, then I will expect you to have the first six chapters read before you come to your next potions class. In fact, you may as well do them right now, dismissed." Snape watched as the students swept past. "Not you, Mr. Potter. A moment before you go."

"Sir?"

"I thought I would explain to you why I asked you those three questions." Snape sighed. "Your mother was quite possibly the most gifted witch Hogwarts has ever produced. She was also a great friend of mine."

"You knew my mother?"

"Quite well until I ruined our friendship," Snape agreed. "One of my greatest regrets is that I was unable to repair it before her death. Mr. Potter, the reason I asked you those questions is because I had hoped . . . I suppose it doesn't matter."

"Sir?"

"Just promise me one thing, Mr. Potter."

"What is it, sir?"

"Promise me that you will at least make an attempt to live up to the potential that I know you must have. That will be all, Mr. Potter."

Harry's thoughts were racing as he left the classroom.

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Snape ignored the odd looks his colleagues shot him and the proud look on Dumbledore's face following that first potions class, he was much too busy planning for the next.

A smile bloomed on the man's face as Lily's son walked into the class and took his accustomed seat.

"Mr. Potter," Snape called out. "Why must boil remover be stirred clockwise?"

"Because it will explode if it isn't," Harry replied with a grin.

"And why will it do that?"

"I'm not sure, sir," Harry admitted.

"Not surprising, it's a third year question." He looked around. "Ms. Granger, you look like you have something you'd like to share with the class."

"Because we're in the northern hemisphere," Hermione replied.

"Correct, take five points." Snape allowed his gaze to sweep the room. "If on the other hand we add one gram of powdered giant tooth, it will not explode. Does anyone know why?" He looked around. "Ms. Granger?"

"No, sir."

"Pity," Snape laughed. "If you had, you'd be a shoe in for the Wu prize for Potions. It's one of the seven great mysteries of our time, be sure to remember to notify your old teacher if you ever figure it out."

"Yes, Professor," Hermione agreed with a blush.

"Excellent." His cheeks were beginning to hurt from contorting his face into a smile. It's all for the cause, he reminded himself. "I want everyone to prepare their materials for the first stage of the potion." He sighed. "Mince, not dice, Mr. Longbottom."

"Sorry, Professor."

"Don't be sorry, get it right next time."

"I will, Professor."

An unfamiliar feeling in the pit of his stomach caused the Potions Master a bit of confusion till he tentatively labeled it as satisfaction, something he had never before experienced on the job. It wasn't research, could never be as pure or wonderful as theory, but perhaps teaching wasn't the hell he'd thought it was.

"Dismissed," Snape called out after a quick check of the time. "Mr. Potter."

"Sir?"

"A moment if you please."

"Yes, sir."

"You've had a defense class?"

"Yes, sir. Yesterday."

"Did the fool they call a teacher spend any time blathering about how you got your scar?"

"No, sir."

"But others have, have they not?" Snape persisted.

"They have, sir," Harry agreed.

"Then listen and listen well." He frowned, trying to organize his thoughts. "Mr. Potter, you will spend your life surrounded by bootlickers and toadies. It can't be helped, not after what all those idiot writers insisted on printing. The truth of the matter is that your survival had nothing to do with any inherent power and everything to do with your mother. The most brilliant witch of our age set out to find a way to keep her child safe and she succeeded. Keep that in mind and do not allow the idiots to swell your head."

"Why don't the defense books say that, Professor?"

"Because those books were written by purebloods that were unable to admit that a muggle born could do something they could not." Snape's jaw tightened. "The fact that they don't credit her with . . ."

He took a deep breath. "I would advise you to speak with Professor Flitwick about the matter."

"I will, sir. Thank you, sir."

"One more thing."

"Sir?"

"How is Ms. Granger getting along in Gryffindor?"

"Okay, I guess," Harry shrugged. "Why do you ask, sir?"



"Because she reminds me a bit of your mother." Snape gave a genuine smile as he thought of the love of his life. "A brilliant muggle born desperate to prove herself. The first few years at Hogwarts weren't easy for Lily, I dare say that I am glad the same isn't true for Ms. Granger." He noted the boy's wince with a deep sense of satisfaction, sure that he'd killed another small piece of what the boy had inherited from James Potter.

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Snape ran through the next lesson in a state of shock. The students were listening to him and nothing had blown up. What's more, while not one of the little dunder heads had produced anything he'd be willing to use himself, every one of them had produced better than what most home brewers ended up with. It was almost enough to make the man find religion.

"Professor?" Harry approached the man after class was finished, it was the first time Snape hadn't told him to stay back.

"What is it, Mr. Potter?"

"You always talk about my mother," Harry began slowly. "Did you know my father too?"

"I did," Snape agreed. "Was there anything else, Mr. Potter?" he asked his voice curt.

"No . . . no sir," Harry replied sadly.

"Mr. Potter," Snape sighed. "Why don't I say that we did not get along and leave it at that?"

"I understand, sir," Harry said his respect for his Mom's friend growing as he realized that Snape did indeed disliked his father, possibly even hated him according to some of the comments he'd heard other teachers make when they thought no one could hear them, but he wasn't going to insult or belittle him to Harry.

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Snape could ignore the puzzled looks the other Professors gave him, but he could not ignore the look of smug satisfaction on the Headmaster's face a moment longer.

"Was there something you wanted to say, Albus?"

"I see that you've managed to put aside your distaste for James Potter," Dumbledore observed cheerfully.

"Not a bit," Snape replied.

"But your treatment of Harry-"

"My treatment of Lily's son?" Snape suggested. "Why wouldn't I be kind to the only thing left of the best friend I ever had?"

"Yes . . . quite . . ." Dumbledore trailed off, at a loss for words.

AN: A lot of people seem to think I hate Snape. Why would I? He's a fictional character. The treatment he gets in a lot of my fics is because it's funny or works for the story. Also, if you leave a review with your email address, this site will strip it out. Does the same to links. Claudio, go ahead.

Don't forget to follow the link in my profile to amazon or smashwords so you can purchase the anthology that holds my short story.

Editing by dogbertcarroll, who as you may have noticed has applied quite a bit of polish to my fics.

Typos by: Jenifer Winterbine, kahless62003, fribergken

Omake: Third Year Defense

"Professor, I . . ." Hermione trailed off with a blush.

"No doubt you were wondering why we're skipping ahead to werewolves," Snape snorted.

"Yes, Professor."

"Professor Lupin has shown you your fears has he not?" Snape demanded.

"Yes, Professor," Hermione agreed.

"My greatest fear is werewolves. I was nearly killed by one when I was a bit older than you are now and it was only the timely intervention of Mr. Potter's father that saved my life." He was amazed to find that he could make the admission with no trace of bitterness in his voice. "It is natural to be afraid of the things that almost take your life. Mr. Potter," Snape barked. "What do you fear?"

"Dementors, sir," Harry replied.

"And what have you done about that fear?"

"I'm learning the patronus charm, sir."

"Wonderful." Snape smiled. "Fear is natural, fear is your body's way of telling you to show caution. So, in that way fear is useful so long as you do not allow it to control you. Mr. Potter is using his fear as motivation to learn a bit of advanced magic, I did the same. Mr. Potter."

"Sir?"

"The patronus charm drives dementors away. Come to me after you've mastered it and we shall find a way to kill them."

"Yes, sir," Harry agreed with a smile.

"Open your books to page two ninety five," Snape continued. "On it you will find a spell to temporarily conjure a shower of silver spikes. Your homework will be mastery of the spell, two feet on other ways to defend yourselves from werewolf attacks, and another foot on spells to combat whatever you fear." He looked around. "Questions?" There were none. "Then close your books and I will tell you exactly why I

am so fanatical about this subject. It starts with a man named Fenrir Greyback . . ."

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Severus sneered when he caught Lupin waiting outside his quarters.

"What do you want?" Slytherin's Head growled.

"Thank you, Severus," Remus greeted his old nemesis.

"For what?" Snape demanded.

"For your lesson," Remus said.

"For teaching the students how to kill you?"

"You know damn well that I would rather die at their hands than to risk . . ." Remus took a deep breath. "For implying that Fenrir Greyback was the werewolf that almost killed you."

"He is responsible for your condition, so he is responsible for all that happened as a consequence."

Omake: Third year climax

"Step aside, Mr. Potter," Snape ordered.

"He's innocent, Professor," Harry said stubbornly.

That gave the Potions Master pause. Should he risk alienating the boy or should he finish what Azkaban started and finally have his revenge on the bastard that had tried to feed him to a werewolf.

"It's true," Lupin agreed. "Look down."

"You," Snape growled on seeing Petigrew alive and putting the pieces together, focusing his hate on the man responsible for Lily's death. "Step outside, children."

"What are you going to do, Professor?" Hermione asked nervously.

"Wait for me at the end of the tunnel." Snape ignored her question. He glared at his old nemesis. "I want the first ten minutes."

"Like hell," Sirius growled. "I . . ."

"We need him to prove Sirius' innocence," Harry said desperately. "Don't kill him."

Snape closed his eyes. "Fine, grab the bastard and come with me, Black." He glanced around. "Lupin, I suggest you lock the door after us unless you'd like to see how well the students absorbed my lessons."

"Thank you, Severus," Remus said. The astonished look on Sirius' face didn't fade for days.

AN: Editing by dogbertcarroll.

Omake: Further down the line

"Black," Snape spat. "Hold your tongue for five minutes."

"Why?" Sirius growled.

"Perhaps Lupin would be better," Snape wondered. "No matter, I have a favor to ask and it is something that you will no doubt enjoy."

"What is it?"

"Destroying my already stellar reputation." Snape sighed. "As part of my agreement with Dumbledore, I am to teach at Hogwarts until the day Harry Potter graduates. I am going to tell you something and I want you to promise that you will hold your tongue until that day or the day of my death, whichever comes first."

"Fine," Sirius agreed. "What is it?"

"You are aware that I was a spy, are you not?"

"What of it?"

"I joined Voldemort believing that he would change our world into something better, that he would cast down the corrupt government and replace it with something else. I was wrong, joining that madman was a mistake I came to regret."

"Tell me something I don't know."

"Your brother reached the same conclusions I did."

"What?" Sirius' pupils shrunk to pinpricks. "My brother . . ."

"Betrayed the dark lord and was murdered for it," Snape clarified. "I was a bit less overt and escaped with my life. I began supplying information to prove my loyalty, nothing useful, but enough to keep him interested."

"Go on," Sirius croaked.

"It all came to a head when I overheard a fragment of a prophecy." Snape closed his eyes. "It was vague, incoherent, and useless. In short, it was perfect for my purposes. Passing it along was the greatest mistake I ever made."

"Why?"

"Voldemort took the bloody thing seriously and decided to act on it." Snape shuddered. "I was horrified and immediately went to Dumbledore, knowing it meant my death but desperate to do anything possible to stop the madman from carrying out his plans."

"It's why the bastard went after Lily and James," Sirius exclaimed in horrified wonder.

"It is," Snape confirmed. "God help me, it is."

Omake for Other Chapters

Mini omake for Chapter 114... Two Years More by Just an old grump

Poppy Pomphrey sat down at her desk, her eyes staring off into horrors only she could speak of. Another day, another...

She pondered the headache potion brewing at one corner. The color had turned a perfect shade of pink, indicating it had finished. She looked at it longingly for a moment, then looked at the empty vial in her hands. After a moment, she threw the vial into the fireplace, pulled the potion from the fire, and began chugging the brew.

Her headache banished, she placed the cauldron back on her desk, wiped her mouth on her sleeve, and picked up her notes. It had taken a long time before she'd figured out a benefit to her job, one that would guarantee her promotion to full Healer; until then, she would have to make do.

Two years. Two years until she could escape from Hogwarts. Two years until she could get a cushy office at St. Mungo's. Just two more years... she took a deep breath as she looked at her notes.

"Clumsy Wand-Waving and Cauldron-Stirring: The Effect of Magic on Sexual Experimentation in Young Witches and Wizards." She'd already written two hundred feet of parchment on her thesis - indeed, the Weasley family were responsible for thirty feet of it, and Malfoy wasn't far behind. With the wealth of information the students of Hogwarts provided, she was assured of finishing her thesis on schedule.

She began writing about the latest event with "Patient C" and the golem, and smiled as she dove into the work. Two years. Just two years more...

Mini Omake for Chapter 113 by Ugly Duckling

Vernon lept up from the breakfast table (lept, in the sense of it taking him less than 30seconds to arise), dropped the broken coffee cup handle, wiped down his crisp new no-longer White shirt that was dripping with coffee, picked up the golf ball that had come to rest on the table, it's progress halted by his plethora of chins, waddled over

to the broken kitchen window, waved the golf ball in the air, and yelled "Damn you Addams!"



Disclaimer: Still busy with other things so I cleaned up an old idea.

## Spark of MADNESS

James woke up to the sound of his wife laughing maniacally. Oh, how he wished that was something unusual! In a flash, it all came back to him; he'd been attacked by Voldemort, how in the hell were they still alive?

"Lils, what's going on?" James groaned.

"I am the greatest magical genius in the universe is what's going on," Lily cackled. "Not only have I destroyed Voldemort, but I have defeated time itself. Bwahahahahahahahahaha!"

"Um . . . where's Harry?" James asked, always the practical one. He looked mournfully at the remains of their house. It was the third time Lily had destroyed it since their wedding.

"Hmmmm?" Lily's wand appeared in her hand and she began waving it furiously while muttering a stream of incantations under her breath. "James?"

"What is it?" he asked with growing dread.

"I may have made a tiny error when I made the runic array," she admitted in a tiny voice.

"Where's Harry?" he repeated.

"He should be getting back from his first year at Hogwarts," Lily replied. "I still don't understand why he didn't come with us."

"I thought you said two hours?" James felt faint.

"It was just a couple of itty bitty decimal places," Lily huffed. "Don't act like you've never made a mistake."

"Let's just go collect Harry," James suggested.

"Yes, let's," Lily agreed.

To James' dismay, Harry was not at 'Sirius' Swinging Bachelor Pad' or at the depressing Black residence in London.

"Maybe he moved?" James suggested hopefully.

"Nonsense," Lily barked. "No doubt poor Sirius was captured by Death Eaters and forced to reveal the fact that Peter was the real secret keeper, and, having no use for our canine friend, the Death Eaters tortured him to death and dumped his mutilated remains in some public place." She placed a solemn comforting hand on her husband's shoulder. "We shall reap a bloody revenge."

"Lily, I . . ."

"After we get Harry," Lily added, switching back to her usual cheerfulness in a flash. "Let us go to the residence of my guardian of choice."

"Yes, dear," James agreed, hoping her choice wasn't who he thought it was, as she would have raised Harry to be like them. His wife was bad enough, he didn't think he could stand it if his son was one of them too. Not after learning of the probable loss of his best friend anyway.

"Come along, James," Lily commanded, grabbing her husband by the arm and transporting them to their next destination.

"I hate it when you do that," James grouched. His heart sunk as he examined their new surroundings, they were in front of a giant chess piece, his worst fears had come true.

"No doubt Harry blossomed under the care of my rival, the number two magical genius in the universe, but there's no doubt that my precious son will need the love and care of his mother to reach his full potential," Lily proclaimed. "Bwahahahahahahahaha!"

James stepped past his wife to knock on the door.

"Yes?" A small blond girl looked up at him. "Are you here to speak with father about the bogwart infestation?"

"We're here to speak with your mother about our son," James replied. Lovegoods, why did it always have to be Lovegoods?

"I'm afraid you won't be able to speak with mummy," the small blond girl said mournfully. "She died in a lab accident."

"Selene die in a lab accident?" Lily shouted. "Impossible, I refuse to believe it. Who are you?"

"Luna," the girl introduced herself.

"Take me to Selene's lab this instant," Lily commanded.

They followed the small blond girl down a set of spiral stairs, past a heavy oak door, and into a dust filled room.

"No one's been in here since Mummy died," Luna reported.

James eyed his wife out of the corner of his eye. Why couldn't he have married a nice normal girl, or even a girl that was only slightly unhinged, like Bellatrix? No, he had to let his fetish for redheads steamroll his common sense. 'Curse you, libido!' he lamented to himself.

"Hah! Just as I thought. Unable to compete with my superior genius, Selene also made a mistake when drawing up her runic array. One I feel compelled to mention is slightly larger than the almost unnoticeable mistake that I am compelled by my strong sense of honesty to admit that I made. Instead of disappearing for two hours, she'll be gone for . . . eleven years, ten months, one week, five days, six hours, ten minutes, and thirty seven seconds. Lucky for her that the size of my generosity is second only to the size of my limitless genius," Lily bellowed. "Bwahahahahaha!"

"Laugh after you've freed Selene, dear," James chided.

"Yes, yes of course, it's much more enjoyable to gloat where your defeated rival can see it," Lily agreed. "Bwaha . . . ahem."

"Does that mean you're going to bring mummy back?" Luna asked hopefully.

"I couldn't rub my superior genius in her face if I didn't, could I?" Lily replied with a wide smile. "Stand back." Her wand flashed, the room spun, and they were graced with the presence of the missing Lovegood.

"Mummy!" Luna sobbed, throwing herself into the woman's arms.

"Did you get into the aging potions again?" Selene asked her daughter.

"You were gone," Luna said, tightening her grip. "We thought you were dead."

"Well I wasn't and I'm back now." She returned her daughter's hug.

"Back thanks only to my incomparable genius," Lily crowed. "It's so sad to see the mighty fall so low, so depressing to see what the woman I once considered my rival was reduced to without the guiding light of my massive intellect."

"Considering the advanced date I'd like to point out that you must have made the same mistake I did," Selene sniffed.

"I'd like to point out that you were no doubt working off my notes," Lily rebutted.

"I'd like to ask where my son is?" James interjected.

"I'd like to know that too," Selene agreed. "Dumbledore disappeared him the night you disappeared yourselves."

"What, why didn't Sirius stop him?" James demanded.

"Sirius was sent to prison for your murders," Selene replied. "We printed an article in the Quibbler pointing out the fact that he was never tried. No one paid any attention."

"So you just left him to rot in prison?"

"So I spent years reconstructing Lily's research in hopes of finding a way to bring you two back," Selene corrected. "Unfortunately, temporal mechanics was never really my field."

"Lily, can you find Harry?" James asked gently.

"A trivial task for someone of my stature," Lily laughed. "After that, I suggest we storm Azkaban and free Sirius. Then, we reap our bloody revenge on the Death Eaters." It would be so much more convenient to do so after they broke into the prison since their targets would all be in one spot. "Bwaha . . ."

"Harry first," James said firmly.

"Right," Lily agreed. "Selene, darling, do you mind too terribly if we use your house as a hideout?"

"Not at all, dear," Selene replied, lifting her daughter up into her arms. "I just keyed you into the wards and the physical key is hidden under the doormat; be sure not to use it or your arms will fall off."

"Thank you, darling," Lily said with a smile. "Come along, James, we've got a son to collect."

"Yes, my love," James agreed. Plenty of girls at Hogwarts and he had to pick Lily. It was times like this, the times she had her clothes on, that he wondered what he'd been thinking.

They arrived on the doorstep of number four and Lily raised a fist to knock on the door.

"I can't wait to hear which ones of those silly laws of nature that Harry's already broken," Lily babbled as they waited for the door to

open. "Will he be like his mummy and have created a horrible ravening beast to serve as his guardian?"

"I don't know, Lils," James replied with a shudder. It had vanished after their second potions lesson. He still wasn't sure whether to be comforted or terrified that Lily's monster had seemingly disappeared. Maybe it was just waiting for him to let his guard down. James glanced around fearfully. Harry's father was snapped out of his musings by the door opening.

"Petty?" Lily exclaimed in shock. "Why are you taking care of my son?"

"Oh god no," Petunia gasped. "Not you, anything but you, you're dead, I know you're dead, they promised me you were dead."

"I'm beginning to suspect that you've been raising my son in a way that I would not approve," Lily announced flatly.

"I thought you were dead," Petunia babbled. "If I knew . . . if I even suspect you could come back I'd have never . . ."

"Shame you didn't, even greater shame you did," Lily intoned. She hit her sister with a silencing charm. "Fetch Harry, James." She made eye contact with her sister. "Get his things and take him out for dinner, I'll meet you at the Lovegood's house."

"As bad as you thought it would be?" James asked.

"Worse," Lily growled. "So bad that I'm feeling positively Olympian." Now where was she going get a liver eating eagle in the British isles? It wasn't like any of the pet shops sold them unless they'd grown some sense in the years she was gone. It was something to hope for anyway.

"Why don't we take care of Harry together first," James suggested. "We can always hunt them down later, maybe make a family trip of it."

"Alright," Lily agreed, her eagerness to see her son overcoming her thirst for revenge. "I'll be seeing you, Petty." Lily stepped over the unconscious body of her sister to take her husband by the arm. "He's locked in his room."

"Definitely making a family day of it," James growled.

"It's statements like that, that remind me why I married you," Lily cooed. "I can't wait to see the look on our baby's face when he sees us." She rushed to the top of the steps, dragging her husband behind, and came to a nervous stop in front of her son's door.

"This is it?" James asked, eying the door.

Lily flicked her wand, causing the door to be torn out of its frame. "Harry, mummy's here to rescue you." Her breath caught when she saw how scrawny he was.

"Mu . . . mum?" The boy gasped, disbelieving the information his eyes were sending to his brain.

"Harry!" Lily sobbed, rushing across the room and throwing her arms around the boy. "Mummy's here now, it'll all be okay." Her revenge on the Dursleys would be bloody and anything but swift. Petunia and the others were going to have a long time to think about what they'd done before she granted them the sweet release of death.

"You're not planning to kill me, are you?" Harry asked suspiciously. Learning that Voldemort was still around coupled with the natural suspicion of anything good happening he'd developed from living with the Dursleys had combined to make Harry a bit cautious.

"Of course not," Lily murmured, pulling him tighter.

"Where were you?" the boy asked, willing himself not to cry. "Why did you leave me all alone?"

"We were trapped outside of time because mummy made a tiny mistake with her runic array," Lily replied. "And you were supposed to be with us, I still haven't determined why you were left behind."

"I've got his things," James announced. "Let's get him out of this place."

"Do we know any trustworthy healers?" Lily asked, softly stroking her son's hair.

"We'll ask Selene, let's go."

"Right," Lily agreed. A deranged smile formed on her face as she thought of a way to express her displeasure to people who'd 'raised' her son. That silly three fold rule may be nonsense, but there was no reason she couldn't invent a curse to replicate its effects. Let the punishment fit the crime, and when the punishment was completed, then Lily would arrive with her eagle to show that there was nothing in the world more dangerous than a mother avenging her son. She felt a laugh bubbling up and ruthlessly clamped down on it, her baby had fallen asleep and she did not wish to wake him.

James shuddered at the look on his wife's face, oh how he hoped it wasn't for him.

IIIIIIII

Selene cocked her head when the wards announced her friends had returned with their wayward child. Time to see what type of boy her godson had grown into.

She limped into the drawing room to meet them. Not because of any injury but because her daughter Luna was doing her best impersonation of a limpet and had refused to release her mother for even an instant as if afraid the woman would disappear again.

"Found Harry, did you?" Selene asked.

"Do you know any trustworthy healers?" Lily demanded. "My sister's pettiness has stunted my poor baby boy's growth. I've got an idea to address that, but I'd also like to get a good idea of his general state of well being first."



"To plot your revenge or to make sure your hair brained ritual won't harm him?"

"Can't it be both? Any way, I think it's time we started plotting our assault on Azkaban. I'm thinking we should make it spectacular so that the the fools tremble at my return and all that."

"Works for me," Selene agreed. A flick of her wand summoned the tea and biscuits. "Care for a snack?"

"Why yes, thank you, my dear."

"Not at all, darling, not at all."

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Harry awoke from what had to have been the most wonderful dream of his life. His parents had returned and taken him away from the Dursleys. Not only that, but he was sure he'd heard them talking about a slow and horrible vengeance on the bastards who'd raised him. Harry sighed, as if his life could be that lucky.

"Hello?" a soft feminine voice called out, causing Harry's eyes to snap open. "I'm Luna, who are you?"

"Harry," he introduced himself automatically. He took a moment to examine his surroundings; he seemed to be in a richly furnished room and his companion seemed to have a death grip on a disembodied hand. "Um-"

"Yes?" Luna prompted.

"Is the person who's hand you're holding under an invisibility cloak?" he asked somewhat hopefully.

"No, mummy detached her hand and gave it to me to hold since I wouldn't let go of it," Luna answered. And then had gone to get 'reacquainted' with her father, saying that she wouldn't need both hands for what she planned to do.

"Aaaaaaaaand I'm done," a beautiful blonde announced as she walked into the room. "Or rather he is. I'm going to need my hand back, darling."

"Here you are, mummy," Luna agreed, holding the appendage up.

"Thank you, Luna." She turned to regard Harry with a smile. "I'm your aunt Selene, I'm going to be looking after you until your parents return from storming Azkaban." The woman absently reattached her hand.

"That wasn't a dream?" Harry asked in shock.

"It was not, dear," Selene agreed. "Your parents and I were both stuck outside time by separate temporal accidents but we're here for you now."

"Is mum really going to get revenge on the Dursleys?" Harry asked hopefully.

"Your mother is going to make them curse the day they were born," Selene promised. "How are you two getting along?"

"Just fine, Mummy," Luna replied, having claimed her customary spot on her mother's leg while she and Harry had their conversation.

"I'm glad. Are you two hungry?" She looked down at her godson, if he wasn't she'd be cramming food down his throat anyway. Boy looked entirely too thin. She made a mental note to have a word with Lily to get in on the revenge.

"If it's not too much trouble," Harry agreed.

"Of course not," Selene replied. She activated the well used kitchen enchantments to have some snacks made. "Sandwiches and juice okay?"

"Fine, mummy," Luna agreed aloud while her new friend just nodded.

IIIIIIII

Sirius was in his cell wallowing in his own filth, something far more enjoyable then it sounded thanks to his dog form, when the cell door flew off its hinges along with a good bit of the wall. To the not secret keeper's astonishment, his best friend walked in through the newly created entrance.

"Hey, Paddy," James said with a grin. "Turns out we weren't dead after all."

Sirius was so shocked by the appearance of his supposedly 'dead' best friend, that he spontaneously transformed back to human form. "One of Lily's experiments?"

"On the nose," James agreed.

"Why'd you marry her anyway?" Sirius demanded.

"The fact that you can ask that question confirms that you never got past the wards she put up to prevent peeping," James announced with a goofy grin.

"That she never let me, like she did you," Sirius corrected. "Here to rescue me?"

James nodded. "And pick up a few 'test subjects' for Lily. I'm really hoping that she won't experiment on us if she's got perfectly disposable Death Eaters to do her dirty work on."

"Do we have that much luck?" Sirius asked, a look of longing on his face.

"We're due for some. Let's hope for the best."

Lily stormed into the cell with a look of annoyance on her face. "What's taking you chumps so long?"

"Just having a reunion, my love," James said quickly. "Did you collect what you wanted?"

"All the Dementors and half the prisoners," Lily agreed. She'd also been kind enough to provide more pleasant replacements for Azkaban's guardians.

"What did you do with the other half?" Sirius asked, regretting the question the second the words were uttered.

"I introduced their insides to the outside," Lily giggled. "They'll be exploding in five minutes so we'd better hurry or we'll need new robes."

James had a sudden and horrible thought. "That killed them, didn't it?"

"It will in four minutes and forty five seconds," Lily replied. "Better hurry."

"Come on, Sirius!" James shouted.

"Right behind you, James!"

IIIIIIIIII

Amelia was just setting her lunch out on her desk when her assistant burst in and ruined everything.

"Madame Bones, it's Azkaban!" he breathlessly gasped.

"What about it?" Amelia demanded. She reached under the table to hit the button that would summon the quick reaction team.

"It's not possible, the dementors have been turned into heaps of strawberry jam and the prisoners have been turned inside out," the man wheezed. "And then they exploded."

"The guards?"

"Two of them were turned inside out, the rest are in some sort of enchanted sleep," the man replied quickly.

"Damn it!" Amelia closed her eyes in anticipation of the headache she knew was coming. "Anything else?"

"A long list of things wrong with the security followed by a short note which stated none of that mattered because we'd have never been able to stop someone of their genius was nailed to the front door of the fortress."

"It said that?" Amelia asked intently.

"Yes, Madame Bones."

"I should have known she'd find a way to resurrect herself," Amelia muttered to herself. "Contact the Department of Mysteries; tell them that SHE is back."

"Tell the Department of Mysteries that she's back," the man agreed.

"No. That SHE is back, emphasize the 'she'."

"Yes, Madame Bones," the confused assistant agreed. "SHE is back."

"Good, now go." The man rushed out of the room before she'd completed her command.

Amelia waited until she was sure he was gone before opening her desk and checking some papers. Right, she had enough time to retire from the Ministry with a full pension. Time to take it before word got around.

She hoped Rufus appreciated getting the whole mess dumped in his lap, as much as she appreciated everything he'd done to her over the years while bucking for her job.

IIIIIIIIII

James and Sirius were still catching up on old times when the group got back to the Lovegood residence.

Sirius was feeling particularly boisterous as they entered the front door. "Let's call Remus over, then we can hunt down the rat together."

"Call Remus, but Peter belongs to me," Lily said firmly. "I've got plans for him, oh yes I do."

"Whatever you say, Lily," Sirius agreed quickly.

"What plans?" James asked.

"Every boy needs a rat to test things on before they're ready for human trials," Lily replied.

"Would it be okay if I helped?" Sirius asked hopefully.

"If it's alright with Harry," Lily said with a disinterested shrug.

Sirius' eyes lit up. Happy that he got to torture Peter and combine it with his godfatherly duties.

James licked his lips. "Speaking of Harry, I think it's time he and I had a father-son talk."

"Is this your way of asking me to give you some privacy?" Lily asked.

"Yes."

"While it may pain me to spend even a moment away from my baby's side, I shall endure." Lily wiped away a fake tear.

"Thanks, Lils." It didn't take long for James to find his son and lead him to a place where they could have a bit of peace.

"What do you want to talk about, dad?" Harry relished the fact that he finally had a male role model in his life that wasn't Vernon. Anyone would have done, he'd even considered one of Ms. Figg's cats. Unfortunately for Mr. Tibbs, the reappearance of Harry's parents had ended that idea.

"Harry." James placed a comforting hand on his son's shoulder. "Son, it's perfectly natural to be terrified of your mother. I myself have a reoccurring nightmare that she occasionally accidentally kills me and then replaces me with a clone before anyone notices." He tried to ignore the ever changing barcode on the back of his neck, pretending to believe that it was just a prank Sirius and Remus had started pulling after he'd made the mistake of telling them about his nightmares. Who knew, maybe it was, a barcode seemed a bit mundane for something from his wife's twisted mind.

IIIIIIIIII

Amelia was in a deep depression when her door was unexpectedly flung open to admit one of her subordinates.

"Madame Bones," the underling called out as he burst into her office. "It's the Dementors."

"The ones that were turned into strawberry jam?" Damn Fudge for not accepting her resignation.

"Yes, Madame Bones. They're eating the remains of the exploded prisoners."

"This sounds like a job for the Department of Mysteries," Amelia said firmly after a brief moment of thought. "Drop the whole thing in their lap and forget about it."

"Yes, Madame Bones."

"In fact." She perked up as she finally thought of a way to reduce her high stress levels. "Dump the whole Azkaban mess in their laps along with any other odd cases that crop up in the future."

"Odd cases, Madame Bones?"

"You'll know them when they happen."

"If you say so, Madame Bones."

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Sirius was just about to drift off to sleep, lulled by the incessant chatter of the women, when a sudden thought caused his eyes to shoot open in alarm.

"Lily!" Sirius' eyes were wild and worried.

"What is it?" She replied.

"The other prisoners," Sirius said quickly. "Was there anyone else that was innocent?"

She glanced down at notes. "There were three other people in prison for crimes they didn't commit," Lily agreed without looking up.

"You didn't do to them what you did to the rest of them, did you?" Sirius asked.

"Of course not!" Lily replied, scandalized by the very notion. "I've got something very special planned for them."

"What were they accused of, darling?" Selene interjected.

"Several counts of muggle baiting," Lily answered.

"And what did they actually do?" Selene prompted.

"Attempted murder of my baby boy." Lily's eyes were shining with unholy rage. "Which is why I've got something very special for them, very special indeed."

"Can I help?" Sirius asked.

"What can you do that's worse than what I'm going to?" Lily demanded.

"Then can I watch?" Sirius whined. "He's my godson and it wouldn't feel right to not get in on the revenge."



"Selene?" Lily looked over at her closest friend with a smile.

"I'll get the popcorn popping," the woman laughed. "I'll be just like old times."

"Hold off on that for a bit, we've still got to get our Harry checked out by a competent Healer."

Lily bent down to talk with her goddaughter. "What have your meals been like, Luna?"

"We're in the middle of strawberry syrup," Luna replied with a grin. "Next month is maple syrup."

"You have pancakes every meal?" Selene asked, hoping to confirm the fact that her husband could still only cook one dish.

"Only for dinner," Luna chirped. "We have bubble and squeak for breakfast and sandwiches for lunch."

"He's branched out," Selene exclaimed in surprise. "All he knew how to make was pancakes when I was dating him. He lived off them for two years before we got married."

Lily giggled. "I think half the reason James proposed to me so soon was because he wouldn't have been able to feed himself."

"I could so feed myself," James said loudly as he and Harry walked into the room. "It's easy."

"Oh, what did you eat before you had me to cook for you?" Lily challenged.

"I went into London and ate fish and chips," James said smugly.

"For every meal?"

"Only for lunch and dinner, I had cold cereal in the mornings."

IIIIIIII

Harry was still busy enjoying the best day of his life. He'd met his Aunt Selene, he'd had a strange but wonderful talk with his dad, he'd met his godfather, and now he was sitting on his mum's lap telling everyone about the adventures he'd had while at Hogwarts.

"Then we gave the dragon to Ron's brother to take back to Romania," Harry finished.

"We ever help smuggle a dragon out of school?" Sirius whispered to James.

"No," James replied proudly.

"As expected of my son," Lily crowed. "I feel a laugh coming on," Lily said, a maniacal grin on her face. "Wait . . . wait . . . here it comes . . . never mind, false alarm. Tell me more about school, Harry, have you destroyed any of your Professor's will to live?"

"I burned one to death with my hands," Harry replied with a shy smile. "But he was being possessed by Voldemort so I don't know if it counts."

"Hah, in your face, James. I told you he'd take more after me. It's just a case of my superior traits breeding true," Lily laughed.

"Do you play Quidditch?" James asked, long practice allowed him to ignore his wife.

"Youngest Seeker in a century," Harry announced.

"Hah!" James laughed. "And hah again!"

"It's just my baby showing that my genetics are so superior that they boost yours," Lily commented. "What year did you get on the team again?"

"Fourth," James grumbled.

"That's when I got on the team," Sirius corrected. "You were on the reserve team till fifth."

"Where as Harry got on the starting line in his first year," Lily finished smugly.

Selene's eyes crossed. "Healer's here."

"Who is it?" Lily asked.

"You remember Andy, don't you? Sirius' cousin. She became a veterinarian after you disappeared," Selene replied.

"A veterinarian?" James said flatly.

"Most mammals are pretty similar when you open them up," Lily said with a disinterested shrug. "And we did specify trustworthy."

"True," James sighed.

"In here, Andy," Selene called out.

"Selene, Lily, and James too," Andromeda said with a warm smile. "I wondered if you three would show up."

"We've also got that useless cousin of yours," Lily added.

Andromeda gave Sirius a measured look. "Is he innocent or are you lulling him into a false sense of security?"

Lily pasted a look of innocence on her face. "Can't it be both?"

"Suppose it can," Andromeda agreed. "You wanted me to check out the kids?"

"We did," Selene agreed. "Are you already finished? I didn't even see you start."

"I've been working on a few things," Andromeda said modestly. "Preliminary findings are that they both have poor nutrition, Harry more so than Luna."

"I've got some ideas for that," Lily cut in. "Is there anything serious we need to deal with?"

"Aside from my cousin?" Andromeda laughed. "Nothing too big, some old injuries on Harry that I'd like to look at later."

"Great!" Lily shouted, raising her fist to the sky. "Are you thinking what I'm thinking, Selene?"

"To the lab!" Selene shouted.

Lily lowered her hand. "Mine or yours?"

"I would suspect that yours is in better shape than mine is at the moment," Selene said with an embarrassed grin. "Not that my husband isn't a perfectly lovely man, he's just useless at everything useful."

"Most men are," Lily said, putting a comforting hand on her friend's shoulder.

Selene stooped down to talk to her daughter. "Wait here with Harry, Luna. Mummy and her friends are going to do something unspeakably horrific that will violate the laws of nature. You've got plenty of time to do that later, so I think it would be best if you used the time you have now to make a new friend."

"Okay, mummy," Luna agreed.

"Do you want me to leave my hand with you?" Selene asked gently.

Luna just shook her head in reply.

"Okay, if you change your mind or you get too lonely, just knock on the door to Aunt Lily's lab and we'll come out. Okay?" Luna nodded. "Good."

James wisely kept his mouth shut until after the women had opened what had been the door to the Lovegood's cloak room and filed in, one after the other.

After he was sure they were gone, he turned to his son with a serious look on his face. "Harry, there are times in a man's life when he needs to stand up and say 'I will not be insulted, I will not take this anymore.' Do you understand?"

"I think so," Harry agreed.

"Good, that was not one of those times. In fact, those times don't exist when it's your mother on the other side."

"He speaks the truth," Sirius agreed. "Lily is always right."

"She can't hear you, there's no need to suck up," James sighed.

"Are you sure?" Sirius looked around fearfully. "She has ways of knowing things."

IIIIIIII

Lily's lab was much the way Andromeda remembered it; a massive well-lit space with odd equipment filling every section and one wall a segment of a giant fish tank. She blinked in surprise as a creature the size of the Knight Bus swam by. She could have sworn that was a . . . but they were extinct so . . . on the other hand, it was Lily they were dealing with.

As she continued her examinations, she noticed something in the corner that would haunt her for the rest of her days. Bound to a large steel rack were three men; each of whom had a tube connecting his outtake to his intake.

Lily noticed what had caught Andromeda's attention and decided to explain. "It's a perfect closed system," she announced. "They can be kept that way indefinitely."

"Why are they being kept that way?" Andromeda asked sickly. "Why not just kill them?"

"Those are the misguided men that decided that it would be a good idea to make an attempt on my baby's life," Lily replied. "Gently showing them the error of their ways is on my to do list."

"That's gentle?"

"That's keeping them from doing any more mischief until I get around to showing them the error of their ways," Lily corrected.

"I see." Andromeda made another mental note to never ever do anything to annoy Lily before filing the memory in the section of her mind that she filed everything else she wished she hadn't seen or found out.

It fit perfectly between the day her daughter had decided to show her friends that she could transform herself into a tentacle monster (sixteenth birthday party), and the day she's walked in on her brother-in-law showing the world why chickens were his favorite animal (The wedding). Though how he'd managed to get polyjuice to work on . . . she severed that line of thought and did her best to re-repress it.

"Igor," Lily shouted.

"Yethss misthtress?" a hunchback replied, limping out of one of the shadows.

"He's new," Selene commented. "Wherever did you find him?"

"He's one of the prisoners I took from Azkaban," Lily replied.

"I thought you said that only three other people were there for crimes they didn't commit?" Selene asked with a frown.

"I committed the crimths I was accused of, misthrethss," Igor replied. "Fifteen countths of grave robbery and ten more of unlawful thspell research."

"Did you get anyone else with such a stellar resume?" Selene demanded.

"Nope, he's the best, but there were a couple others that may catch your eye. I'll let you poke through them later."

"Thank you, Lily."

"Not at all, Selene."

"Why did I miss those two again?" Andromeda muttered to herself. "Come to think of it, why did I become friends with them in the first place?"

|||||

A smile bloomed on Hermione's face when a familiar looking snowy owl swooped through one of the windows and landed on the dinner table.

"Preck," Hedwig announced, holding out her leg.

"It's from Harry," Hermione said. She took a few minutes to read through the letter and then read through it again twice more, wanting to be sure that it had said what she'd thought it said. Why in the world did . . . then again, it was Harry. "Mum, can I borrow your physics books?"

"Just be sure to put them back when you're done, darling."

"I know, mum." Hermione turned back to the owl. "It may take some time."

"Preck," Hedwig replied, glad the girl hadn't noticed that the best post owl in the world had taken the opportunity to clean her plate when she wasn't looking.

|||||

James walked out of the lab, up to his son, and squatted to look the boy in the eye.

"Harry, your mother and your Aunt Selene have cobbled together a strange contraption to do a few tests on you and Luna." He pulled the boy into a hug. "It'll probably be okay, but if it isn't . . . if it isn't, just know that I love you."

Luna tugged on the man's robe. "Does this mean we can go back to mummy now?" she asked hopefully.

"Come on," James sighed. He led the children into Lily's lab.

"Mummy!" Luna squealed, darting towards the woman and wrapping her arms around her mother's legs.

"I missed you too, darling," Selene murmured, reaching down to place a comforting hand on her daughter's head.

"Harry!" Lily called out with a wide grin. "Come over here and get in the large dangerous looking glass jar."

"Okay, mum," Harry agreed. The boy was sure that his father had been joking, everyone had talked about how much the man enjoyed pranks right?

"Good boy." Lily locked him into the contraption. "Now this probably won't hurt a bit."

"Uh, mum . . ." An uncomfortable thought penetrated Harry's skull, perhaps his dad hadn't been joking after all.

"Hit it, Selene," Lily screamed. "Bwahahahahahahaha!"

"Right," Selene agreed, throwing a large knife switch.

Lightning flared, smoke billowed, and a red light came on as the machine made a 'ding' sound.



"Your turn, dear," Selene announced as she hustled her daughter into the machine. "Now, Lily."

"For SCIENCE!" Lily bellowed as she flipped the switch. "Bwaha-hmmmm."

"What is it?" Selene demanded. In the background, the machine dinged to announce it was done with Luna.

"Harry's results," Lily replied.

"Good?"

"There was never any doubt that my baby would have good results," Lily sniffed.

"That high, huh?"

"Yes," Lily agreed. "That high, how did Luna do?"

Selene checked the read out. "The same."

"Trade results, I'll show you Harry's if you show me Luna's"

"Deal," Selene agreed.

"Gimme," Lily demanded. The two women went over their godchildren's results.

"Lily, do you realize what this means?" Selene shouted.

"If we breed our children together, we will create super intelligent grand babies," Lily cheered.

"No arranging marriages for our son!" James said firmly.

"But-"

"No, you promised," James reminded her firmly. Sometimes a bloke had to put his foot down to remind the wife who wore the trousers in the family.

"Fine." Lily sulked for a few minutes before perking up again. "I did promise not to arrange any marriages. I did not promise not to encourage any relationships to develop."

"We'll need more children to make this a valid study," Selene pointed out. "Two test subjects does not an experiment make."

"Would you like to provide the son this time?" Lily asked.

"Thank you, dear, I believe I would."

"Perfect."

"No using the children for experiments," James added quickly, aware that the situation was spinning away from the tenuous thread of control he liked to think he had over it.

"I don't recall promising that," Lily replied with a grin.

"Drat." He'd have to find a way to make it up to the kid later, and in light of the size of the oversight, he was going to have to do something really special for the boy.

"The way I see it, you'll need more than one girl involved with Harry, nothing says scientific method like a harem of . . ." Sirius froze at the twin feminine glares directed at him. "Shutting up now."

IIIIIIII

Hermione walked up to her mother with a stack of papers in her left hand, a large book in her right, and a frown on her face.

"What is it?" Her mother asked.

"Could you check my equations, mum?" Hermione replied with a blush. "I think I must be making a mistake."

"Give it here," the woman demanded. She spent a couple minutes pouring over the paperwork before a matching frown appeared on her face. "If you're making a mistake, I'm making the same one."

"Thanks, mum."

"What's this all about?"

"Harry's gotten himself into trouble again, mum," Hermione replied.

"What's this trouble have to do with time travel?"

"I don't know, mum," Hermione sighed.

"Let me know when you find out."

"I will, mum," Hermione agreed.

|||||||

Harry eyed the runic circle his mother had drawn up with a hint of fear, surely his father had been exaggerating? If only he'd known the truth, his fear would have turned into full blown panic. Mindful of his father's warnings, he decided to make sure everything would be safe.

"Could we have aunt Selene double check this?" Harry asked hopefully.

"You don't trust your mummy?" Lily asked with tears in her eyes. "You think your mummy would do something to hurt you? Oh the shame, the horror, if only I'd been around to properly bond with my son. Curse the completely understandable and almost insignificant mistake that tore me from his side," she sobbed.

"I trust you!" Harry said quickly. "It's just that . . ."

"Great," Lily cheered, her tears disappearing. "Contact. Transformers, not much meets the eye," Lily sang to herself as lightning filled the room. "Transformers, touch one and you'll fry."

A column of light rose into the sky and split into three parts, each heading off and disappearing. Ten seconds later, three smaller streams of light returned.

"What happened?" Harry asked, he felt woozy and everything was blurry.

"Hmmm?" Lily cast a couple of quick diagnostic charms. "I'm such a genius!" She laughed. "Sometimes I even amaze myself, it's a wonder I'm not crushed under the massive weight of my massive intellect." She smiled at her son. "Take off your glasses, Harry."

"I can see," Harry said in shock.

"You're also bigger and blessed with perfect health," Lily added. Just a little down payment from the Dursley family for all they'd put him through in the past. "We'll use it on Luna next, nothing too good for my future source of grand babies!" Lily raised a fist in the air. "In fact, why don't you go get her now."

"Okay, mum," Harry agreed after making a quick check that he hadn't lost or gained any appendages. The second he opened the door, he was assaulted by a very annoyed owl.

"Preck," Hedwig scolded, slapping him in the back of the head with her wing. "Preck preck preck."

"Do you know this owl, Harry?" Lily asked, her hand hovering over a big red button.

"This is Hedwig, my owl, remember?"

"Oh . . . right." Lily's hand moved away from the button. "Looks like she's got a message for you."

"I wonder why she's so angry?"

"We're out of phase with the rest of reality, really confuses Owl's homing senses," Lily replied.

"Preck." Hedwig bashed him in the back of the head one more time with her wing before presenting her leg.

"Thanks, girl." Harry scanned the message. "It's from Hermione."

"What did she say?" Lily asked, hoping to be more involved with her precious son's life.

Harry just handed the letter to his mother.

"Hmmm." Lily's eyes narrowed. "A bit sloppy but she got to the right place in the end, conclusion is a bit off but I can see how she made it . . . alright, let's go."

"Go where?" Harry asked.

"To meet this Hermione of yours," Lily replied. She grabbed him by the hand and walked out of the lab. "James, we're leaving for a bit!"

"Where are we going, my love?" James asked.

"To meet with one of Harry's friends," Lily replied.

|||||||

The sound of an earth shattering explosion caused Arthur stick his head out of the shed and confirm that, yes, a large cloud of smoke was rising from the Lovegood place. He wasn't surprised she was back, just surprised that it had taken so long . . . unless the daughter was a bit of an early bloomer in which case it amounted to the same thing. He had to have a talk with two of his boys.

|||||||

Harry knocked on the door and tried to ignore the way his mother was impatiently tapping her foot.

"It's been almost ten seconds and they haven't answered the door yet?" Lily growled. "I most certainly do not approve."

"Maybe they're not home," James tried to sooth his wife.

"They're home," Lily bit back.

"And the door is opening," Harry said nervously.

"Harry?" Hermione said in shock. "What are you doing here?"

"Is this Hermione?" Lily demanded.

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "But . . ." He found himself brushed out of the way as his mother rushed forward to examine the girl.

Lily gave the girl a once over before moving in for a closer look. "Good teeth, kinky hair, muscle tone could use a bit of work . . . hmmm."

"Harry, why is this woman poking me in the kidney?" Hermione asked in a tone that told the world she was still trying to decide if it was all just a bizarre dream.

"Mum?"

"Hmmm." Lily cast a quick charm. "She's got the same blood type as you do, Harry, and you know what I always say; it's always good to have a source of spare blood walking around!"

"Mum?"

"Alright, I approve," Lily said with a nod. "She can be your lab assistant."

Hermione's eyes narrowed. "What do you mean assistant?"

"You're good at research aren't you?"

"Yes, but . . ."

"You do all of Harry's research, don't you?"

"I do, but . . ."

"Good, you're already his assistant, we're just formalizing it." Lily nodded to herself. "Every proper genius needs an assistant on hand to deal with the tedious things and to help them with their urges."

"Help them with their urges?" Hermione squeaked, her brain swirling with perverted innuendo.

James' eyes widened. "Wasn't Narcissa your assistant, Lils?"

"She was," Lily agreed. "And I suppose I really should go collect her."

"You should, you really really should," James agreed with a goofy grin, his brain also swirling with perverted innuendo. "In fact, I insist that we do that right now."

"Bye, Hermione," Harry said. "I'll try to visit later."

"Bye, Harry," Hermione mumbled, her eyes glazed.

IIIIIIII

Arthur smiled when the twins joined him in the shed, doing his best to fix their faces in his memory. It wasn't easy, the conversation he was about to have, but it was necessary.

"You wanted to talk with us-" Fred began.

"-dad?" George finished.

"Sit down, boys." Arthur stared at the twins for several seconds. "You boys know it would kill your mother to lose you, right?"

"What's wrong, dad?" George asked, caught up in the fact that their father was more serious than they'd ever seen him before.

"I know you won't pay any attention to me if I tell you that Harry Potter and Luna Lovegood are off limits," Arthur sighed. "And I definitely

know that you'd just take it as a challenge if I told you that James Potter and his gang were better pranksters than you could ever hope to be. So I'm going to tell you this, one of you needs to keep their hands clean."

"Uh." The twins shared a look. "Dad?"

"Think of it like this, boys. There's a big nest of hornets; one of you can poke it with a stick while the other watches from a safe distance. Then, when the inevitable happens, we'll just tell your mother that you boys had a big fight and refuse to be in the same room together. She still can't tell the difference so the surviving twin will have to pretend to be his brother sometimes and that way she'll never know what happened to the other twin." Arthur put a hand on each boy's shoulder. "It won't be easy, but it will keep your mother's heart from breaking. I'm counting on you boys and I'm just glad that it was you two and not one of your brothers. I've got no clue how we'd be able to pull this off without a spare . . . maybe through large amounts of polyjuice or something, doesn't matter. Just remember; one boy angers the bees, the other watches from a safe distance."

"Uh-"

"-sure dad."

IIIIIIIIII

They arrived in front of a large regal manor house and Lily immediately went to the door and began pounding on it. Four seconds later the sound of footsteps announced that someone was coming to address the knock.

"You see, Harry," Lily said as the door cracked open. "Took less than six seconds for the door to be answered, that's the mark of a proper lab assistant."

"Lily!" Narcissa squealed. "I was wondering when you would return." She embraced the other woman. "Is this your son?"

"Say hello, Harry," Lily prompted.



"Hello, Ms. Malfoy," Harry said dutifully.

"How's your experiment going?" Lily asked eagerly.

"I was able to successfully adapt polyjuice to transform chickens into human form and compounded my success by crossing the result with the Malfoy line," Narcissa reported. "Would you like to examine my notes?"

"I would," Lily agreed. "Have you noticed any odd traits in the resulting hybrid?"

"He seems to strut around a bit, but I am unsure which side he gets it from." Narcissa sighed. "To be honest, I was too excited to have achieved results so early and too disgusted with the thought of allowing Lucius to touch me to set up a proper control."

"I wouldn't worry about it, Cissy, there are some prices too high to pay for progress. Sleeping with a Malfoy is one of them."

"Thank you, Lily." Narcissa stepped aside. "Come in, come in and make yourselves at home."

|||||||

There were a lot of advantages to being Head of one of the four Hogwarts Houses. Those advantages increased every year you were on the job. Chief among them was the tremendous amount of gossip you got to hear. Thus it was no surprise that Minerva McGonagall was one of the first to hear of the return of her two 'favorite' students.

"Evening, Scott," Minerva called out as she walked into the bottle shop.

"Evening, Minerva. What can I get for you?"

"Ten cases of Laphroag Quarter Cask," Minerva ordered.

"Ten cases?" Scott gasped.

"You're right," Minerva agreed. "Make it thirty and be sure to have a few cases reserved for me. It's gonna be a stressful year."

AN: Was going to expand this a bit before tossing it up, don't have the time at the moment.

Polish by: dogbertcarroll, tengokujin

Typos by: Clell Harmon, faerakhasa, kuopiofi, ubereng, 39

Scenes by: ubereng

Scenes that would be included in a longer version:

"No more Ms. Nice Lily," she growled. "It's time I showed the world what fools they were to oppose me."

|||||

It hadn't been hard to get her baby boy to talk about his childhood and time at Hogwarts, a couple crocodile tears and he'd folded like a newspaper. She really had to remember to break him of that habit in a few years.

"Urge to kill . . . rising," Lily growled.

"Who?" Narcissa asked.

"Dumbledore," Lily replied, all traces of anger vanishing. "Why do you ask?"

"I am your assistant," Narcissa pointed out. "Therefore, it is my duty and privilege to help you deal with your urges. Say the word and I will begin planning the old man's long overdue exit from this world."

|||||

"Sibelous?" Lily scratched her chin. "Oh yes, wasn't that the name of the sad man who used to steal my panties?" She leaned in to whisper

into Harry's ear. "I forced Sirius to wear them for a week before I allowed Sloperdonk to steal them. Focus on that the next time you're in his class and he tries to make eye contact."

|||||

Harry stared the man in the eyes, mindful of his mother's instructions and it was therefore a bit less than a surprise than it would have otherwise been when the Potions Master began screaming, grabbed the nearest bubbling cauldron, and began chugging the hot liquid. On the plus side, thanks to the Professor's timely intervention, it was the first time Neville brewed anything that didn't explode.

|||||

"If you're really Lily, then what is my name?" Snape demanded.

"Swindlebuck?" She ventured.

"It's Severus," he corrected.

"Right, Snodertamp," Lily agreed confidently.

"It's her," Snape cried out joyously. "Lily always used pet names for me."

Lily leaned over to whisper into her husband's ear. "What was his name again?"

|||||

"It's simple, all I did was swap out their past selves with the current version that had been driven insane. Anyone first year should have been able to do it," Lily explained, watching Neville's reunion with his parents.

Omake by Chris Hill

"James? It can't be!" McGonagall exclaimed as she saw her once student.

"OHOOHOOHOOHOO! Professor, it's good to see you again, but then again, I am a Genius!"

Minerva's eyes narrowed, there was only one person who laughed and acted like that in her classes, which meant it was them. "Welcome back Lily, James. You do know it has been over ten years, don't you?"

James tried to not roll his eyes, but failed in his endeavors. "Yes. Quite. Naturally. Is my son here?"

"Come along. He's in the hospital ward, seems to get his ideas of making my hair white from you."

James perked up, "He's a prankster!"

"No, thankfully."

James deflated and his shoulders slumped. She meant Harry took after his mother, which meant mad arrays and science and things no sane person was meant to know. "So, what blew up?"

McGonagall huffed, "Well, lets see, he fought trolls, had his friends follow him on a quest to do insane things, and killed a teacher."

James groaned. Yes, his son took after his mother. DAMN IT! Where were those reprobates that were supposed to prevent that and remove any sort of dangerous item, like a pen, pencil, quill, rulers, or other things that were part of Lily's madness?

"My son has shown he's as good as me in the Science Of Magic!" Lily exclaimed.

One could hear the capitals.

"No!"

Now Lily's shoulder's slumped while James perked up to pay more attention. "Then what happened?"

"The boy has gathered a group of friends who like to break the rules to prove themselves.

Both parents straightened up, and said, "Then he does take after me!"

McGonagall muttered to low to hear, "Unfortunately."

She then thought of who would be visiting Harry and decided on something else. "Why don't I take you to my office while Harry gets ready. We can talk for a little bit."

In no way would she let James inspire Ronald, or worse, Lily inspire Hermione. It was bad enough with these two, and with their son, and two deciples...

Yes, she needed a drink before anything else.

Omake by lancemeister1994

James walked into Fortescue's Ice Cream Parlor after a long session with the Goblins, trying to get himself declared alive and regain his titles. Lily, being Muggleborn and a Potter by marriage only, had had a comparatively easy time and had excused herself to Flourish and Blott's hours ago. He'd decided he needed a sugar-boost from ice cream goodness before trying to winkle his spouse out from amongst the accumulated literary knowledge of the past eleven years, when his tired eyes saw a petite redheaded girl sitting with her back to the door. 'Hmm, something must have stressed her out enough at the bookstore that she needed some ice cream. And she always prefers to eat her ice cream as her child form. That made for a long nine months when she was carrying Harry.' He walked up to his wife, made a long arm to snag a nearby chair and sat down, draping his right arm over her shoulders and wandlessly conjuring a silver spoon into his left hand.

"Hey honey, did something go wrong at Flourish and Blotts?" He hugged her close, "Don't worry, you can tell me all about it when we get home."

Ginny was terrified. Who was this man who was -handling- her so familiarly? 'When we get home? What...' she looked up, up into the ADULT face of her crush, Harry Potter, the Boy-Who-Lived. Never mind that, when she'd left him not ten minutes ago after the debacle between her father and Mr. Malfoy, he'd still been twelve, but... her brain went into shutdown mode. James, on the other hand, was looking at the ice cream in his spoon. 'Pistachios and chopped walnuts? What the Hell? Lily hates nuts in her ice cream!' He looked down into a pair of brown eyes and shot to his feet like he was shot from a cannon. "MERLIN'S BALLS!"

Molly came running over from the counter where she was paying her tab, screaming at the top of her lungs, "Get away from my little girl you BEAST!" Her upraised wand glowed with the barely restrained magic she was about to direct at the maunder, the pedophile, who assaulted her baby girl! Lily, Harry, Hermione, and the remaining Weasleys were packed into the doorway.

Harry still had the confused expression from his earlier reunion and was not tracking overly well yet. "What? Dad? Ginny? Missus Weasley? Mom? Wha?" Hermione had a hand over her mouth, aghast. (Or maybe amused, her dad -had- introduced her to Benny Hill and Monty Python at a delicate age, after all.) Lily cut through the cresting chaos by stomping her foot, raising a concentric circle of magic and dust and sending it shooting away from her.

"James Potter! Just what do you think you're doing!" She stalked up to him, knee length red hair swaying behind her and looked him square in the eyes, nose to nose. "You. Couch. One week. No exceptions." She turned on her heel. Suddenly, the five foot nine inch amazon was replaced with a four foot two inch near duplicate of Ginny, with green eyes. "And no nookie!" she added stalking back to the door. "Harry, it's time to go, sweetie." She took his limp arm and turned him out the door. "James, let's go home."

Not a soul moved inside Fortescue's, except James, who was waving his arms, first in front of himself, then pointing at Ginny while frantically shaking his head, then at where Lily had stood, with one

hand at her adult height and the other at her shorter height; and then repeating the sequence frantically, while everyone else stood slackjawed.

"James, we're waiting!" rang from outside. Head bowed, he shambled out the door as Molly's wand slipped from suddenly nerveless fingers.

"What the Fuck?"

"Hermione!" Ron yelled. "Language!"

Omake by ausfinbar

"Yes Hermione, I understand that you created a device that compressed a trans-phasic runic array and allowed you to use that as the power source for your transmogrifier, however, as you failed to account for the buffer overload, you will have to live with the fact that you now, when combined with your experimental modified polyjuice, have cat ears and a tail. This is a result of you not following a proper procedure and at the very least, documenting your work so you can undo what you have done. Look on the bright side? You are better off that Ron."

"Narf!"

"thank you Ron."

Lots of girls at Hogwarts wanted to be with the Boy-Who-Lived, and he had to pick Hermione. It was times like this, the times she had her clothes on, that he wondered what he'd been thinking.

Omake by Silas Dunsmore

"Drat." He'd have to find a way to make it up to the kid later, and in light of the size of the oversight, he was going to have to do something really special for the boy.

"The way I see it, you'll need more than one girl involved with Harry, nothing says scientific method like a harem of . . ." Sirius froze at the twin feminine glares directed at him. "Shutting up now."

Luna said softly, "I am not averse to the concept," then blushed as everyone turned to stare at her.

"You really are willing to be part of a harem?" her mother gently asked.

"No, Mum, never in a million years. I just want to \_have\_ a harem."

Omake by meteoricshipyards

"But Mrs. Potter! If you do that it will cause a paradox and kill the witch or wizard who does it"

"Nonsense! Does Doctor Who die of paradox?"

"But he's just a fictional character!"

"Bite your tongue! He's my hero. Besides, how could I have a threesome with my husband if it killed me?"

"Er, too much information, Mum," Harry put in.

"What? No such thing. But back to the matter at hand. You use the time turner, go back one hour, join the army of Hermiones, overcome the defenses around the Restricted Section, return to your dorm, wait with the rest of the Hermiones until you come in and go back in time, go back two hours, wait for your first self to show up, go to the Restricted Section, etc."

"That's completely against the rules of Time!" Hermione insisted. Suddenly, a group of Ravenclaws burst into the Great Hall, yelling, "There's an army of Grangers attacking the Library! They have Madam Pince tied up, and are looting the Restricted section!"

"But I'm right here?" Hermione yelled. They saw her, screeched and ran out.



"Run along, now dear. Once you get back to your dorm, put your plan in motion," Lily told her, pushing her out of the dining room towards the central staircases.

"But..."

"No time for it. The rest of you will be showing up any moment now."

"But..."

"No time for that, either. And don't forget to get the book I requested."

With one final "but", Hermione went up the stairs.

Lily and Harry returned to the Great Hall.

About an hour later, Hermione returned, holding a book.

"Here's the book you wanted," she said, handing over a rather uninteresting looking book titled "21 More Things to do with a Levitation Ward."

"And here's what was hidden in the secret, expanded compartment in the back cover." She handed over an envelope. Lily looked in and smiled.

"What is it?" Harry asked.

"Remember your comment on too much information? Seeing those pictures would be way too much information," Hermione said with a blush.

Omake by Stick97

Hermione looked wistfully at the photos, before looking at Harry out of the corner of her eye.

"and you say you found a way to ensure the alpha male traits breed true?" asked Hermione, tapping his lip with a quill.

"Well, at least in the first generation. We would need at least another iteration to ensure the accuracy of our results." said Lily speculatively.

"Yes, yes, we can't simply speculate on such important matters," replied Hermione, nodding along with Lily.

She failed to notice Lily dancing the Snoopy dance while chanting "Grandbabies! Grandbabies! Grandbabies!"

Disclaimer: Part two of 'Odd Ideas' number 102

There is Nothing so Satisfying, Than Vengeance Achieved.

"I see," Amelia said softly. She pulled a piece of parchment out of her desk and handed it to the girl. "Would you mind telling me what you think of this?"

Hermione took the paper from the woman and quickly read through it, her hands were trembling uncontrollably when she finished.

"Oh no, no, no, no, no," she sobbed. "Ron." She grabbed his sleeve.

Ron took the letter from his best friend. "This is genuine?" he asked, feeling faint.

"So far as we can tell," Amelia agreed. "Do you need me to call in a Healer?"

"That might be best," Ron agreed. It felt as if he were standing outside his body watching events unfold. "She hasn't been eating."

"They'll be here shortly," Amelia promised. "Do you have a way to get back to wherever you came from? I'm afraid your escort isn't going to be available."

"I'll get her back," Ron promised.

"Do not hesitate to ask for assistance if you need it. I, and by extension this entire department owe Mr. Potter a great deal for what he's done." Amelia took the paper back. "And as Mr. Potter is a man that values his friendships, it would not do to deny you anything."

"Thank you." Ron wrapped an awkward arm around his friend. "If you don't mind, we'd . . . could you call us in for a meeting every day?"

"Afraid that Dumbledore is going to confine you to quarters?"

"That and we'd like to get all the news you have about Harry," Ron agreed.

"I will see to it," Amelia agreed. "Will that be all, Mr. Weasley?"

"Aside from the Healers, yes."

Amelia walked out of her office and worked herself into a fury as she approached the interrogation room.

"Talk!" she barked as she flung open the door and stormed in.

"Swear to god boss, I didn't know!" Tonks said quickly. "I thought we were guarding the kid from Death Eaters, I never would have . . . I swear to god boss, I really didn't know."

"You are going to tell me every detail you know about Dumbledore's little club, you are not going to hold anything back, you are not going to hide anything, and you are not going to protect anyone!" Amelia growled.

"I'll tell you everything I can, boss. Charm's preventing me from telling you a couple things," Tonks agreed quickly. "I really thought we were helping him, boss. I really messed up, I . . . what do you want to know first, boss?"

"Everything!"

IIIIIIII

Harry squinted at the pages in the Drug reference manual as he tried to figure out the right combination of painkillers and stimulants. The potions were beginning to lose their effectiveness and so he'd been forced to turn to muggle pharmaceuticals to keep going.

IIIIIIII

Ron felt helpless as he guided Hermione to her room. The girl had been inconsolable since their meeting with Madame Bones. He took a couple deep breaths, and suddenly, in a flash he knew what he had to do. Ron felt like he was an observer in his own body as he walked into the Order meeting.

"Ronald, go back up stairs."

He ignored his mother's instructions as he walked up to the head of the table.

"Albus Dumbledore," Ron said formally. "I challenge you to a duel."

"What?" Molly screamed. The rest of the Order just stared at the boy in shock.

"To the death," Ron added.

"I refuse," Dumbledore said formally. "My dear boy, what's this . . ."

"Then let this be a warning," Ron interrupted. "If Harry dies, one of us will soon follow and I won't grant you the courtesy of a challenge." With that, Ron spun on his heel and marched out of the room. Ignoring the chaos he'd thrown the room into.

IIIIIIIIII

Harry woke up as the sun rose. He'd gotten a full night sleep, he'd gotten enough of the bastards that they either couldn't, or wouldn't keep up the rate of attack. They'd given up initiative, it was time to stop reacting.

He took a handful of pills and washed it down with a couple potions. It was a race to see what would get him first; the death eaters, Voldemort, his injuries, or an overdose. Harry's money was on overdose, he had no intention of letting himself die when there was even a single one of the bastards left above ground.

"Who to go after first?" He laughed, of course, there was only one choice.

IIIIIIIIII

Lucius awoke in a cold sweat. What in the world had gotten him up at this ungodly hour? A quick check of the wards revealed . . . his heart stopped, a quick check of the wards revealed that he had no wards.

He had to get his wand, he had to . . . the door blew off its hinges.

"Rumpere," Harry incanted. Three more hexes, the Malfoy line had ended, the house was aflame, and Harry was on his way to the next target.

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Hermione glared at the pink haired Auror, projecting every bit of hate, every bit of rage she felt for the crimes her friend had suffered.

"I'm sorry, I didn't know," Tonks whispered.

"You didn't know?" Hermione hissed. "How is that supposed to bring Harry back?"

Ron put a restraining hand on her shoulder. "Dumbledore fooled us. We can't blame her for that."

"About that." Tonks licked her lips. "I'm an Auror. It might be best to let me go first to wear him down."

"Thank you, but no." Ron smiled. "I said what I said and I stand by it."

"First for what?" Hermione asked.

"I told Dumbledore that I'd kill him if Harry died," Ron replied. He turned back to Tonks. "Was that all?"

"Ron," Hermione sobbed.

"Madame Bones sent me to bring you back to the Department," Tonks said.

"Good news?" Ron asked hopefully.

"No news," Tonks replied.

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"Boss," A breathless Auror barged into Amelia's office.

"What is it?" Amelia demanded.

"It's Potter," the man said quickly.

"What about him?" Amelia held her breath while she waited for the answer.

"He's gone on the offensive," the Auror replied. "Malfoys, Flints, and Carrows are gone."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Potter killed them all and . . ."

"Chief," another Auror called out. "I've got someone here you're gonna want to have a word with."

"Oh?" Amelia raised an eyebrow. "Who?"

"Me," the Head of the Greengrass family said bluntly. "Unless you'd like to tell your Aurors to let me go."

"He was on the scene of Potter's latest attack," the Auror said helpfully. "Says he saw the whole thing."

"Step into my office," Amelia said calmly.

"Said the Auror to the . . ." he trailed off.

"What?" Amelia prompted.

"I try not to make a habit of making statements that could be incriminating," he replied with an easy smile.

"Care to explain what happened?" Amelia asked.

"Care to offer me immunity," the scion of the Greengrass family retorted.

"What are we talking about?" Amelia asked. "Hypothetically speaking."

"Hypothetically?" He mused. "Oh, I'd say several counts of trafficking in illegal potions components. Perhaps a couple more of tax evasion and several more of smuggling."

"No murder or anything to do with Death Eaters?" Amelia asked intently.

"Aside from a normal business relationship?"

"Aside from that, yes."

"Then no murder or association with Death Eaters beyond what was necessary to sell potions ingredients to men I knew or suspected to be Death Eaters."

"Alright then," Amelia agreed, "I'll agree to overlook any nonviolent crimes such as tax evasion, smuggling, trafficking in illegal items, and the like."

"Thank you," he sighed.

"So what happened?"

"I was making a rather large sale to twelve Death Eaters," Greengrass began. "I do not know what it is, but the box is still in my sitting room if you'd like to confiscate it."

"I'll send some men, continue."

"Six of them died in a moment," he said in an admiring voice. "One minute they were joking and the next they were dead, it was..." he fell silent unable to find the words to describe it.



"Potter?"

"Revealed himself and began dueling the other six." He laughed. "My instructor used to say that skill beats speed and power. He was wrong. Potter didn't use many spells and he was a bit sloppy with the ones he did, but by god the power." He shook his head in wonder. "Not to mention the fact that the boy's reflexes are inhuman."

"What happened next?"

"They hit Potter with one of the unforgivables," he replied.

"Which one?"

"I don't know."

"How can you not know?" Amelia demanded.

"Because I lost track. I saw them cast several throughout the rest of the fight and I saw all three connect more than once," Greengrass replied. "He shrugged off the crucio like it was nothing, wasn't slowed by the imperio, and I'm not sure he even noticed when he was hit by the killing curse. It was like something out of a legend."

"I see, what were you doing?"

"Hiding under a table and hoping that I didn't get hit," he said honestly. "Potter killed each of his opponents and turned to me. I thought I was going to die but he just squinted at my face for a few seconds and turned away. I called out and to my surprise, he stopped."

"Did he say anything?"

"He thanked me after I gave him a chance to plunder my potions cabinet, and again when I had a house elf prepare a meal to go."

"Why did you do that?"

"I like to stay on the good side of wizards that possess the power to extinguish my family line," he explained. "It's the reason I got into the import business."

"Oh?"

"I'm much more valuable as an independent without a mark than I would be as a follower." He gave a tight smile. "So long as the deliveries are on time, my family is left alone."

"I see."

"Not to mention the opportunities it gives me to gain valuable contacts in other places, places far from the conflict at home."

"Then why are your daughters in Hogwarts?"

"My clients would get nervous if they thought I was preparing to flee the country," he sighed. "The girls both wear portkeys at all times, activating one will activate them both."

"Thank you for your time, Mr. Greengrass."

"A pleasure to be of some service to the Director of Magical Law Enforcement."

IIIIIIIIII

Harry wrapped his left hand around his nemesis' throat and drove the remains of his shattered wand into Voldemort's eye with his right.

The family watched in shock as the boy throttled the darkest wizard of the century for a few seconds before losing his grip to pick up a rock. Again and again the boy drove the rock into the Dark Lord's ruined face until the skull shattered and chunks of brain began spattering onto his face.

"He's dead, lad," the husband said softly. "You've won."

"I've won," Harry said, tasting the word. "I got them all." The boy tried to stand up, but his legs wouldn't support him. As his vision began to dim he could hear Hermione's voice quoting 'He who seeks vengeance must dig two graves: one for his enemy and one for himself'.

He chuckled. It seemed fitting that with Voldemort dead he died himself. His purpose was done and now... he could be with his friends again.

AN: Still not too happy with this, but it's better than the last version.

Beta by dogbertcarroll who deserves much thanks for all the time he spends polishing my fics.

Omake by: Just an old grump

No sound is more terrifying to an auror than silence, Amelia thought as she moved through the Riddle manor. Silence means a surprise is waiting around the corner; silence means a trap is about to spring, that an ambush is waiting to ground. Silence was all she got as she guided her team through the manor, slowly working her way to the main ballroom.

So far, the place was a charnal house. Potter (who else could it be?) had not been subtle in his dealings; she'd already counted no less than four families extinct in her walk, and she hadn't even made it to the main room yet. Alexander Nott had not survived; Michael Selwyn hadn't won; the Jugsons had no sons left. The fight had been to the knife, with blood and gore splattered over the walls and ceiling, severed limbs and heads demonstrating the sheer brutality of the moment.

She wasn't hearing anything, but the smell of death was overwhelming. This definitely called for a shower when she was done.

In a perverse way, she was relieved when she made it to what she presumed to be the throne room. The main double-doors had been blown off the hinges; one bolt still hung on stubbornly, leaving a single door leaning off to one side. She leaped and rolled over to the

other side of the door, then gestured to her aurors, signing her intention to enter.

Shacklebolt took his position opposite her, and nodded. With moves practiced over decades of service, the two entered the main room, shields up and wands drawn, waiting for any spells that could come their way.

More silence awaited them. More gore. No one had survived, it seemed. Snape had been decapitated when the door was blown; his severed head barely had time to register surprise. Crabbe curled up in a corner, his lips stained with his own blood, his intestines held in his hands. The Parkinsons... well, they both were there, she thought, but it'd be a challenge putting them back together. And in the center, at the throne...

Voldemort had seen better days. The Dark Lord's broken wand was still clenched in his hand; what was left of his other arm had been curled around him, clearly severed before the end. Given the blood, she suspected the cause of death was a nasty cut to his leg severing the femoral artery; whoever he'd fought against hadn't stopped there, though. The remains of another wizard's wand poked out from his eye; his skull had been smashed into a bloody pulp, splattering blood and brains around his throne.

Murderers, all. Murderers - except the last. Amelia screwed her eyes shut at the final, then forced them back open. Someone had to see; someone had to remember; someone had to tell the story.

A bloody smear trail led back from Voldemort's body to the winner of the fight - if anyone could be called a winner. Harry Potter lay collapsed on the ground, having apparently won his battle against Voldemort. A pool of crimson lay around him, a dark halo surrounding his head. He'd been personal in his destruction of the Dark Lord, then had tried to crawl away.

She blinked in surprise. Through all of this carnage, through all this death, he'd ended with a smile on his face.

Disclaimer: Enjoy the 'show.'

## Retirement

Harry stared at Draco for a few moments as he tried to figure out his next course of action. On the one hand, he felt a tremendous sense of vindication, he was right, the little bastard was plotting something. On the other he felt depressed, who would he share it with? His friends had found other things to occupy themselves and, much as he might wish it otherwise, being the 'boy-who-lived' left very little time to give into one's hormones.

"First things first," he mumbled to himself. "Obliviate." A professional could have removed the memories so seamlessly that no one would ever notice their absence, Harry dragged his nemesis to the bottom of one of the moving stairs, added a few bruises, and hoped for the best.

Again, the thought came to take his newfound information to his friends. That thought was quickly followed by the reminder of the way they'd already brushed him off. Best to keep their hands clean anyway, he thought to himself.

"Must be nice to have normal concerns," Harry mused, punctuating it with another boot to Malfoy's ribs. Dumbledore was likewise out which left . . . no one, it was a depressing but not unfamiliar thought. After giving one last boot to Draco, and imperiling the chance that there would be a future generation of Malfoys infesting the castle, Harry turned and walked away. He had some planning to do.

It didn't take long, no more than two hours in the Library, to confirm that he had no chance of facing Voldemort in a fair fight with much expatiation of both surviving and emerging victorious. Maybe one or the other, but not both. When one added in the legions of Death Eaters . . . well, it looked like he was going to have to draw on the lessons learned from life at the Dursley house; deception, sadism, and an absence of fair play would be his guiding lights.

One positive came of his resolve to cast aside his humanity and damn himself for the sake of his friends, it opened other avenues of

research. As for the rest? There would be consequences, he accepted that, no one would look at him the same after he did what was necessary, so be it. He'd spent the first ten years of his life without friends, it was surprisingly easy to contemplate the rest of his life without them.

As the days went on and his plans matured, he found himself growing more and more removed from the other students until it was a rare occasion he interacted with any of them outside of class.

"Harry, I've found you," Katie announced as she barged into the abandoned classroom he'd commandeered for his research.

"What can I do for you, Katie?"

"Just wanted to know why you haven't shown up for Quidditch practice?" the witch replied. "You didn't think the toad's ban would last forever, did you?"

"I hadn't thought about it," Harry admitted.

"Well think about it, McGonagall is counting on your support to put the trophy in her office."

"Like she supported me last year?" Harry snapped. "Let her choke on that trophy."

"Harry, I . . ." Katie trailed off, unable to put her thoughts into words.

"Sorry, I've got a lot of things going on right now. Best replace me for now, I don't think I could focus on the game."

"I understand, Harry," Katie sighed. "You'll tell me if you change your mind?"

"I promise," he agreed. Harry felt a great sense of loss as he watched his old teammate leave the room. There was nothing he'd have enjoyed more than a game, but Quidditch was a distraction he couldn't afford, not when his plans were finally coming together. "Dobby!"

"Yes, Harry Potter sir?"

"Anything to report?"

"Dobby has removed a dark item from bad Malfoy and replaced it with a fake," the house elf replied.

"Good work." Harry laid a hand on the house elf's shoulder. "I couldn't do this without you. Thank you, Dobby."

"Dobby is happy to help," the house elf replied, chest puffed out in pride.

"Good, there are some things I need you to get for me."

"Anything, Harry Potter sir."

"Good, I need a couple more muggle books for myself and I need you to make something for yourself."

"What does Dobby need to make for Dobby?"

"Some protective gear, the plans and patterns are with the list," Harry replied, hoping to all that was holy that his friend wouldn't have to test his life on his sewing skills. Shame they didn't make chemical suits and gas masks in house elf sizes.

It took three more weeks of research before he dared allow himself hope. All his planning, all his preparation, all his work had been nothing more than a way to keep his mind focused. As the solution presented itself, he found himself broadening his horizons.

"This could work," Harry croaked, shocking himself. It could work, the thought penetrated his mind. Granted, things could go wrong, Voldemort might not be home or the Death Eaters could muster enough intelligence to fill a teaspoon and decide against launching a raid from their main safe-house. On the other hand . . . on the other hand, it might be a good idea to start planning for a future, something he hadn't dared allow himself to contemplate until that moment. He'd

have no friends, he'd already accepted that, no one would dare acknowledge any relationship with him after he carried out his plans. Perhaps it was time to start looking for some place quiet where he could spend the rest of his days?

"Dobby!"

"Yes, Harry Potter sir?"

"Do you think you could get a message to the Minister without being caught?" Harry asked.

"Dobby can, Harry Potter sir."

"Tell him I'm willing to give him a way to stay in the big chair. Tell him if he wants to hear more, we're going to have to have a meeting. Just the two of us."

"Yes, Harry Potter sir."

The house elf hadn't been gone more than five minutes before he returned. "Incompetent Minister wishes to meet with you now, Harry Potter sir."

"Where?"

"Three Broomsticks, Harry Potter sir?"

"Could you make sure that he's alone? Bring him to the Shrieking Shack if he is."

"Yes, Harry Potter sir."

"Make sure it's really him and make sure he doesn't have any portkeys or dark marks if you can do that too."

"Dobby can, Dobby will, Harry Potter sir."

"Thank you, Dobby."



The Minister was waiting and less than pleased by the chosen location when Harry arrived.

"What's this about?" Fudge blustered.

It only took five minutes for Harry to explain why he'd called the meeting. He then had to explain it three more times, using progressively smaller words each time until finally understanding lit the Minister's piggy eyes.

"In exchange for . . ."

"Voldemort's head," Harry agreed. "A full pardon covering all past and future actions, a full pardon for Sirius Black, and the projects I gave you. Give me those, and I'll end this war before the end of the school year."

"How about a pardon for yourself and we forget the rest?" Fudge suggested.

"How about everything I asked for before, a pardon for all my friends, and a hundred thousand galleons?" Harry countered.

"What?" Fudge squeaked. "That's preposterous."

"Do you see anyone else offering to take out Voldemort?" Harry asked calmly.

"Deal, I'll give you what you want the second his head is on my desk," Fudge agreed sourly.

"I want it in advance," Harry said calmly. "Or no deal."

"How do I know you won't just run off with it?" Fudge demanded.

"You don't. Was there anyone else offering to do the job?" Harry smiled. "I also want five more projects, muggle identification saying that I'm over eighteen, and a binding agreement that the Ministry will leave me alone."

"You can't . . . what do you mean, leave you alone?"

"Your problem, Minister, is that you see me as a threat to your position. The fact is, you're right, I could be. Agree to leave me alone and then I'll be compelled to leave you alone, it's common courtesy."

"I see." Fudge stared at the boy for a few moments. "Deal."

"Pleasure doing business with you, Minister."

"Just stay out of politics till after I retire."

"I think I can agree to that," Harry said with a smile.

Privately, Harry was more than a bit amazed by the fact that Fudge was true to his word. The next day, the front page of the Prophet was headlined by the news that new evidence had cleared Sirius Black, laying the blame for the travesty of justice squarely at the feet of Fudge's political opponents and the credit for overturning the miscarriage of justice that had befallen a pureblood scion squarely in the Minister's lap. Say what you would about the corrupt bastard, he knew politics.

As the days counted down, Harry threw himself into completing the last minute details of his plans. He began skipping meals and classes with alarming regularity. The Professors noticed, the other students noticed, his friends noticed. Shame he'd gotten too deep, there was no turning back now, he had to do what he'd agreed to do, he had to fulfill his destiny.

The final day arrived and Harry felt a strange sense of calmness overtake him. When night fell, he'd either be victorious and on his way to a peaceful life or he'd be dead. There was no middle ground, it was an oddly comforting thought.

He waylaid Draco and his bookends before they had a chance to cause any trouble, stripped them of everything, and locked them in an empty broom closet. They'd be rescued and forced to endure the humiliation of being found naked, or they'd succumb thirst and be found dead. Harry cared not which, but he figured that he'd be

soaking his hands with so much blood that it wouldn't hurt to spare a life or two.

Harry left the three bound boys to their fate and set off to meet his at the vanishing cabinet.

"Dobby!"

"Yes, Harry Potter sir?"

"Do you have those potions I asked you to get?"

"Yes, Harry Potter sir," Dobby agreed.

"Good, I want you to banish them through the cabinet after I open it, then get to the side so you don't get hurt if something comes through."

"Dobby will, Harry Potter sir."

Harry flung open the cabinet and was promptly covered in dust from the first explosions. He cast the bubble head charm on himself and put on his mask, sparing a moment to make sure he had a good seal. "Send in the special package and then get out of here, Dobby!" his muffled voice ordered.

"Yes, Harry Potter sir!" The house elf complied. "Good luck, Harry Potter sir!"

Harry darted through the cabinet and into the cloud of poison that was settling into Voldemort's latest hideout. It hadn't been difficult to resurrect the horror of the Great War, not with a full potions lab, a Minister that owed him favors, and a hyperactive house elf.

He found a scene of horror on the other side of the cabinet. Bellatrix was bisected, her face recognizable only because it'd been shielded by the shredded bodies of her compatriots. The blood of ten men licked at his ankles, causing the boy to take a moment to drink in the scene before moving on.

Fifteen paces on, he stepped over the choking form of Lucius Malfoy, the man's eyes were swollen and the characteristic blisters were already beginning to appear. It would have been a mercy to end the man with a quick spell, Harry walked on.

'Bastard had better be home or I won't be able to keep my promise to the Minister,' he thought to himself. Luck was with the boy and he found the self styled Lord Anagram choking to death at the foot of his throne aside the coward that had betrayed the Potter family. It took them ten minutes to die, Harry enjoyed every second of it.

A severing charm and a block of lucite took care of his promise to the Minister and Harry so no reason to linger in the charnel house he'd created.

He stepped back into Hogwarts. The room of requirements, sensing his need had already set up a decontamination area. He closed the cabinet and stepped into the chemical shower, it wouldn't do to die now and be denied his reward, not after experiencing his moment of triumph.

"Dobby!"

"Yes, Harry Potter sir?"

"Give this to the Minister and then either stay here, join me on the boat, or do whatever you wish," Harry ordered, handing the little elf the block of lucite containing Voldemort's head.

"Dobby will be joining you, Harry Potter sir."

"Better hurry then, I'm leaving with the tide," Harry advised.

A quick portkey took him to the heavily enchanted yacht he'd had the minister prepare as part of their deal. A faint pop informed him that Dobby had arrived and he cast off the lines and allowed the boat to pilot itself out to sea.

He made a dozen stops on the way to the earth's sole uninhabited continent. All in all, it took him nearly a month of sailing and three

weeks of travel across the ice before he arrived at the bottom of the world.

He was only two miles away from the nearest humans and walking on land that hadn't seen air in half a million years. Harry was proud of his new home under the ice. The greenhouse was a marvel of magical engineering, filled with forests, lakes and fields. Twenty Hogwarts could have comfortably inhabited it with their grounds without taking up all the space. Building it was a feat that had taken months of labor from the best enchanters in Europe to create and months more for the best warders the Goblins had to ensure he'd have peace. Harry closed his eyes, for the first time since he could remember, he was at peace, content.

AN: Attacking through a vanishing cabinet always struck me as a good idea that could potentially go very bad, very quickly.

Typos by: Stephni Warner

Omake: The shape of things to come?

or

How I might continue this if I were so inclined.

Maybe six months of solitude was great, after eight he started getting bored, he has several portals set up connecting his refuge with different parts of the outside world and after another few weeks, decided it was high time he used one.

Harry was amazed to learn that there were schools that would train anyone to deal violence for a payment of gold and time. As he had plenty of gold and nothing but time, he attended the best until they to lost their allure.

They say that once one has hunted man, they are no longer satisfied with other prey. Harry didn't know, he'd never tried other game and he saw no reason to try it. It had been almost pathetically easy to break into the the man's office. One would think being the top magical law enforcement officer would mean they'd have a bit of security.

The man walked in and sat at his desk for nearly a minute before he noticed that he was not alone.

"Who are you?" he gasped.

"Savage," Harry replied, giving the name of what he'd become to destroy Voldemort. "I hear you have a dark lord problem?"

AN: No plans and no motivation to continue this and I much prefer the direction meteoricshipyards took in his Omake than the one I took in mine.

Omake by meteoricshipyards

He reclined on the couch when a noise from the nearby bushes had his wand in his hand instantly. He was about to fire a spell when a blond head appeared over the rose bush.

"Hello, Harry Potter. You haven't seen any giant purple snorklewackers around, have you?"

"I'm sure I haven't, but..."

"Good. Cause one is after me. Do you mind if I hide out here for a while?"

"I wasn't expecting..."

"Thank you," she said, interrupting again. She sat at one end of the couch. "Go ahead, lie down again."

"But..."

"There's plenty of room."

"But..."

"Lie down!"

"Yes, Luna."

"Have you ever head a foot massage, Harry?"

"Er, no."

"Then this will be a new experience..."

Disclaimer: Selection of Omake, don't expect too much from them. In other words, have low enough standards and you won't be disappointed.

## Black Eye

Luna bounced into the library and collapsed bonelessly into a chair next to Hermione.

"Hello, how is your day going today, Hermione?" Luna asked.

"Fine I . . . what happened to your eye?" Hermione gasped. The other girl's left eye was swollen shut. "And why haven't you gone to Madame Pomfrey?"

"It turns out that Harry is a mean drunk and I wished to speak with you first," Luna chirped.

"He hit you?" Hermione growled.

"Of course not," Luna giggled. "I'd think that you off all people would know that Harry would never do such a thing."

"But you said . . . I . . ." Hermione trailed off. "Care to provide a bit of context?"

"Hmmm?" Luna dragged herself back to reality and fixed her working eye on her friend. "I decided to get Harry drunk and in his inebriated state, he thought that it would be a splendid idea to kill Voldemort."

Hermione groaned. "Then what happened?"

"We went to Uncle Lucius' house and Harry was most put out to find that Voldemort was not in," Luna explained. "So put out that he decided to severely chastise the Death Eaters that were there."

"So you got hit by one of the Death Eaters?" Hermione ventured.

"A piece of one, yes," Luna agreed. "I think that it was a kneecap."



"Oh . . . Luna?"

"Yes, Hermione?"

"Why did you decide to get Harry drunk?"

"Because plans 'a' and 'b' did not work as I wished them to," Luna replied. "Why else would I get Harry drunk?"

"What was the purpose of your plan to get Harry drunk?"

"Seduction of course. Why else would I wish to get Harry drunk?"

"You're trying to seduce Harry? Of course, it all makes so much sense now," Hermione sighed.

"I know," Luna agreed.

"I . . . wait, you said you wanted to speak with me about something?"

"Since plan 'c' did not work, I've decided to move on," Luna explained.

"What's your next plan?" Hermione braced herself for the worst.

"Plan 'd' of course."

"Of course." Hermione closed her eyes. "What does plan 'd' entail?"

"Plan 'd' is for you and me," Luna replied. "After all, no man can resist two women."

AN: A bit predictable but I needed an easy brake from my thesis.  
Polish by dogbertcarroll.

Omake: It's in the Numbers

Luna bounced into the library and collapsed bonelessly into a chair next to Hermione. It only took five minutes of staring before the other girl broke.

"What do you want, Luna?" Hermione asked.

"Your aid in a project I'm working on," Luna chirped.

"What project is that?"

"Seducing Harry, of course," Luna replied. "So will you help?"

"Why do you need my help? Why can't you just do it yourself?"

"Because my value isn't high enough," Luna replied. "No girl's is."

"What?" Hermione squawked. "Explain, now!"

"The other Ravenclaw girls got together to assign values to all the boys in the upper years," Luna replied. "Harry scored the highest."

"So?"

"So the boys did the same thing," Luna explained. "With you, we rate high enough to have a chance with Harry and he's really the only available boy in Hogwarts that I'd consider."

"What about . . ."

"Neville has been claimed by Hannah Abbot and I am not willing to go against the Puffs." Luna raised a finger. "Ronald informed me that he was a homosexual when I asked him, Justin . . ."

"Wait, Ron's gay?" Hermione squeaked.

"That's what he said when I breached the subject of starting a relationship with him," Luna agreed.

"Oh . . ." Hermione blinked. "Glad he decided to come out of the closet."

"And then he went right back into the closet to rejoin Lavender," Luna agreed. "How did you know where I found him?"

"I . . . who else did you consider?"

"Justin, who is has also been marked as Puff Property. All the other boys are either Ravenclaws, which I am not going to consider, Taken, or Malfoy."

"I suppose." Hermione sighed. "Why can't you just try on your own, Luna?"

"Because I've looked over the other girl's work and I can't find any mistakes," Luna replied, brandishing a parchment.

"Let me see that," Hermione demanded. "Hmmm . . . carry the two . . . okay, I'm in."

"Just like that?" Luna asked in shock.

"I can't find any errors either," Hermione admitted.

"Wonderful, I'll go tell the others," Luna cheered.

"Others?"

"The Patil twins are in so we only needed fifteen other girls," Luna agreed.

AN: More mindlessness, using my precious brain juice on real work and this for relaxation.

Addition by: remiheikawa

Harry looked at the delusional girls and opened his moth to dissuade them from this notion that he was worth nineteen of them. Except his vocal cords refused to work. He blinked. Tried to speak again and then coughed as he considered the logic of his planned statement.

He looked at the girls, took the parchment out of Hermione's hand looked at it. Took a deep breath looked Hermione in the eye and took his life into his own hands.

"Only a fool would argue against your maths Hermione."

And somewhere, somehow, a Large dog animagus got the urge to cheer.

Omake: Harem

"Oh god it's great to have a bit of time with the guys," Harry groaned.

"Hey, Harry," Ron said, trying not to glare at his best friend.

"You blokes have no idea how hard it is to have a harem," Harry grumbled.

"No," Dean agreed with a frown. "No we don't."

"Most of us don't even know what it's like to have a girlfriend because they're all in your bloody harem," Seamus added harshly.

"You don't know how much I wish I could trade places with you," Harry commented as he took a sip from his glass. "Sure, a twelve girl orgy is fun the first couple times, but every night?" Harry sighed. "And then there's all the times you get stopped for sex during the day, wears a bloke out it does."

Seamus had leapt off his seat, hands out stretched intent on throttling the boy who had a harem. It was only the timely intervention of Ron and Dean that saved Harry's life.

"That's . . . horrible . . . Harry . . ." Seamus said through clenched teeth as he returned to his seat.

"Yeah," Dean agreed. "Pity we can't trade places with you."

"There's always polyjuice," Ron joked.

"You'd do that for me?" Harry asked hopefully, brushing a tear off his cheek.

"Not a man here that wouldn't in a heartbeat!" Dean agreed.

"I just . . . thanks guys, I . . . I don't know what to say," Harry sobbed. "Just that you're better friends to me than I am to you, no way I'd risk my bits like that. I . . . thank you."

"No problem, Harry, now where are we gonna get polyjuice this time of night?" Seamus said quickly.

"What do you mean, risk your bits?" Ron demanded.

"Well, Hermione said she's developed a ward that will cause extreme testicular compression to any male trying to pass themselves off as me using polyjuice or other disguise magic," Harry explained. "But I'm sure she was just joking."

"Why in the hell would she do something like that?" Dean asked, horrified that such a ward could exist.

"Some of the girls were worried about Malfoy sneaking in disguised as me," Harry explained. "Which is stupid when you think about it since every time Malfoy's tried to sneak into the harem he was polyjuiced into one of the girls." Harry shuddered. "One time, I almost found out too late."

"We'll work on a way around the ward, Harry, then you can have a bit of time off," Seamus assuaged his classmate. "In the mean time, can we have a few hairs to help us research?"

"Sure," Harry agreed. "Take yarghhhh." He bit off a scream as Seamus ripped out a chunk of his scalp.

"Thanks, Harry."

"No problem, Seamus," Harry rubbed his new bald spot. "I . . . damn."

"What is it?" Ron asked.

"Time for the evening orgy," Harry sighed, shoulders drooping and looking the very picture of dejection. "See you guys later."

"Bye, Harry," Ron called.

Dean waited until he was sure the golden boy was gone before rounding on Seamus to demand some answers. "Just what in the bloody hell are you thinking?"

"Harry said that Malfoy is polyjuicing himself into a girl and trying to shag him, right?" Seamus asked.

"Yeah, so?"

"So any port in a storm," Seamus replied, brandishing his fist full of hair. "Anyone know where I can get some polyjuice this time of night . . . or where I can find Malfoy?"

AN: Played with the polyjuice in the past, never did get around to writing my fic on why having a harem would potentially be hell on earth.

Omake: Mythic Myth Stompers

The wireless crackled and sputtered for a few seconds before Harry managed to get it tuned.

"Luna Lovegood and Hermione Granger," the announcer began. "Two of the most brilliant witches to come out of Hogwarts. They don't just tell the myths, they stomp them into jelly."

"Welcome to an exciting episode of Mythic Myth Stompers," Hermione greeted the audience.

"Today, we're going to be answering some viewer mail," Luna bubbled.

"First letter from a Dee Malfee?" Hermione said uncertainly. "Someone with horrible handwriting. They ask, just how well endowed is Harry Potter?"

"If you remember our myth, is Harry Potter too much for one woman, you'd know the answer was very," Luna replied. "Next letter from a H.

Gunderson. They write asking why all our myths revolve around having sex with Harry Potter."

"Simple answer, they don't," Hermione said.

"They don't?" Luna asked in shock.

"You remember our mythical creature episode, don't you, Luna?"

"Didn't we test the myth that having sex in a forest keeps away unicorns by having sex with Harry in a forest?"

"Yes, but that wasn't the main focus of the myth so one can't say that the myth revolved around it," Hermione explained.

"Right you are, Hermione," Luna agreed.

"Next question from a Ron W . . . something, nother one with bad handwriting. He asks, why do you two only have sex with Harry? Why can't you have sex with me for a change?"

"The answer is, we don't just have sex with Harry."

"Right you are, Luna. We also have sex with each other. As to the second half of your question." Hermione's voice hardened. "Maybe if you'd showered and been less of a git when we were at Hogwarts, you bloody git."

"Next question is from Harry," Luna squealed. "He's wondering when we're going to revisit the myth that Harry Potter is too much for one woman."

"Well, Luna, we've already tested that myth ten times in the last week. So I'm thinking . . ."

"Right now?" Luna asked hopefully.

"Right now," Hermione agreed. "Sorry to cut the episode short, but we've got myths to smash."

"Less talking, more stripping!"

AN: Not sure where this came from, not sure I want to know.



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### Remmy's revenge

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"Woof!"

"Not again," the man moaned, glaring down at the dog in his arms. On the plus side at least his wolf side usually mellowed out after it happened. After carefully hitting the dog with a wandless contraception charm, something all of the marauders save Peter had gotten quite adept at casting, he found the stash he'd made the night before, got dressed, and found a small cafe in Hogsmead for a spot of breakfast.

"Cup of coffee and a newspaper," he ordered. One plus side to his inner wolf's night was that the creature didn't leave him a physical wreck the next morning.

The headline was all about the opening of St. Mungo's brand new Malfoy wing to treat magical (read pureblood) children. Flipping to the next page in disgust at how the man had been able to successfully clean his image, Remus glanced at the page and was about to flip to the next when something stopped him. The story was nothing exceptional, a human interest about a boy winning an owl in an essay contest. The photo though . . . the photo contained a picture of a deadman.

"Well what are you doing there, Peter?" Remus mumbled to himself. It looked like there was one other Marauder alive and out of Azkaban, and if Peter was alive then that meant . . . oops. Well, it wasn't like Sirius had never made a mistake. He was sure his friend would forgive him. After all, he'd forgiven Sirius for almost making him eat Snape. The thought of putting any part of the greasy bastard in his mouth still rolled his stomach.

A quick investigation, made even simpler by the recovery of a letter by James Potter, confirmed his suspicions. Sirius was innocent, Peter was a traitor, and as usual it was up to Remus Lupin to clean up the mess.

It took nearly two hours to figure out a plan to spring Sirius and another three to enact it. Pesky visitor hours.

Remus smiled as the boat docked at Azkaban Prison for the incredibly incorrigible. The bribe to get the boatman to do his duty had meant that he wouldn't be able to buy a bottle that month, but it would be well worth it if the plan paid off. Besides, he had every intention of forcing Sirius to reimburse him after the escape.

"Purpose of visit?" the bored guard demanded.

"Here to visit Sirius Black," Remus explained.

"And why did you bring your dog along?"

"For protection," Remus replied, looking down at his large canine companion. "The dog's here to take care of Black if he tries something."

"Sounds reasonable," the guard agreed after pocketing his bribe. "You've got five minutes. Make 'em count."

"Oh I will," Remus agreed. He walked down to the cells and into his old friend's home for the past several years.

"Remmy, you've got to believe me, I didn't . . ."

"Shut up!" Remus growled, flashing his friend a hand signal. "I don't want to hear it so shut your stupid face!"

"You shut your stupid face!" Sirius replied with a gesture of his own. "You stinking . . . uh . . . stinker!"

"You never did have much imagination, Black!" Remus retorted, taking off the dog's collar. "I see now that coming here was a waste of time. I hope hell is worse than here, I don't want to think you'll be better off." He pounded on the door. "Guard, let me out!"

Remus stepped out into the hall and slammed the cell door behind him.

"You forgot your dog, Mr. Lupin," the guard pointed out.

"So I did," Remus laughed. "I guess we'll have to go back and get him eventually. In the mean time, why don't we walk down the hall and enjoy a nice glass of whiskey?" Remus held up the bottle and raised an eyebrow.

"The dog can wait," the guard agreed. "What kind of whiskey is that?"

"The kind with alcohol in it," Remus replied.

"My favorite kind!" the guard cheered.

They returned a few minutes later to find the cell literally covered in blood. Sitting in the middle of it, licking his chops and looking inordinately proud of himself was Remus' pet.

"I guess Black tried something," the guard said dryly.

"I guess so," Remus agreed. "Well, looks like it's time for us to get going."

"There's still the matter of the dog," the guard sighed. "You know what has to be done to creatures that harm a human."

"And I'm going to do it myself, my dog so it's my responsibility," Remus agreed. "Shame to put ol'Padfoot down like that since he was only trying to protect me from Sirius Black, but the law's the law."

"True. How were you planning to do the deed?"

"Well, I was planning to put him out to stud and see if too much work did him in. If not, I suppose I'll have to put my hopes on the all steak diet doing the deed."

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"He's missing one of his toes," Ron replied.

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"Gee, thanks, Mister," Ron said happily.

"No problem, kid." He watched in pleasure as the Weasley boy accidentally bit the wrong rat, taking more than a bit of joy from the creature's pain. "No problem at all."

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"Handsome rat you've got there."

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"First he was my brother's pet, then my brother won a contest and got an owl with the money and now he's mine."

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To Ron's disgust, his pet, for some reason, refused to mate with any of the female rats he was presented with.

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"Right you are, son, and if he doesn't. We'll just try again and again until he does." Or the contraceptive charms wore off, they were supposed to be good for ten years or until canceled. "In fact, here's five galleons to start you off with."

"Gee, thanks, mister."

"One more thing, kid."

They both ignored Scabber's panicked squeaking as the first rat began his turn.

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"Which were lifesavers, let me tell you. Being pregnant again with a house full of boys was so stressful that I smoked all the cigarettes and drank all the whiskey before Ron was born. Then, washing the baby made my hands dry out and I found a use for the lotion. Course, the lotion made my hands slippery too and I might have accidentally dropped little Ron on his head a few times."

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Ginny shivered in horror, getting a sudden image of herself as a female Ron.

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"Hey guys, check this out." Ron waved the stick, and the squeaking creature, around in a wide arc. "Larga Mingo!"

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## Failed Fics and Abandoned Ideas

Warning: This fic contains . . .

### Ritual Abuse

It was the third thursday of December, which meant of course that most of the students were home on holiday and the house elves were doing laundry.

"Harry Potter sir has an extra sock," Dobby squealed in delight. "This means that Dobby gets to keep it for hisself." And in return Dobby had promised to stop watching Harry sleep.

"Yoink." The sock was snatched from Dobby's fingers. "This'll look great in my shrine," Colin announced.

A sneer appeared on the house elf's face as he regarded his opponent. "Dobby want's to know, does bitch wish to dance?"

"Bring it," Colin growled. It was time to rumble.

The elf hit his larger opponent square in the groin with a one two, followed by another left, and finished off with a devastating uppercut to the left testicle. Colin learned a valuable lesson that day, never fight someone eye level with your genitals without some form of protection.

"Dobby is winner and all time champion!" The little elf cheered, his sock clutched in his victorious fist.

"Gurgle," Colin replied, still curled up in a fetal position.

"Dobby is off to clean the room of victory," the house elf announced.

For those that don't know, the 'room of victory' was a massive storage space filled with a thousand years of dust covered junk that was impossible to keep clean through any means, magical or mundane. House elves far and wide came to Hogwarts to commemorate important events and achievements by spending hours removing tons and tons of encrusted dust from valuable historic artifacts. In short, it was the closest thing to heaven for a house elf on earth.

A smile on his face and a song in his heart, Dobby disappeared for an hour in heaven. This caused a smile to bloom on Colin's face as the boy came to the realization that he was all alone with Harry Potter's unguarded underwear, looks like that shrine was going to be getting a new centerpiece after all.

Dobby paused forty five minutes into his cleaning session to examine a book he'd found locked in an old desk. It was a book of rituals and as the little elf had heard Harry Potter state that he needed to study rituals to catch up with his nemesis, Dobby made the difficult decision to forgo the last fifteen minutes of cleaning in favor of getting the book to Harry Potter as soon as possible. Decision made, Dobby disappeared with a pop.

The little elf found Harry sitting in the Gryffindor Common Room's most comfortable chair in front of the fire place.

"What's up, Dobby?" Harry asked with a lazy smile on his face.

"Dobby has found a book of rituals for Harry Potter sir, Harry Potter sir," the house elf explained.

"Thanks, Dobby," Harry said with a smile, having a vague memory of having decided that he needed to study ritual.

"The great and mighty Harry Potter sir is praising Dobby!" He squealed. "Oh, happy day. Dobby must go tell the other house elves."

"You do that," Harry agreed as his odd little friend disappeared.

At first, Harry planned to do what he always did when he needed to get information out of a book which was to give it to Hermione and let

her deal with it. Unfortunately the girl was off doing something with her parents for the holidays and the chair he was sitting in was really comfortable which prevented his owling it to her. Resolving to have her friend deal with the matter later, Harry opened the book to flip through it and froze when he saw the first ritual in the book.

It was a dream come true, a ritual that would allow him to pass his History NEWTs with high marks, it was a ritual that granted the ability to sleep in class and learn everything the teacher lectured on that day.

"Hermione must never learn of this," Harry whispered, almost afraid that the girl would appear despite the fact that she was miles away, knowing that she would stop at nothing to prevent him from gaining what she would see as an unfair advantage.

The ritual wasn't a difficult one; all he needed was an old quill, some coals from the fire, a chicken leg, and thirty minutes of chanting.

It may have been the first ritual Harry performed during winter holidays, it would most certainly not be the last.

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Meanwhile, at the Dark Lord's Dark Lair . . .

"Lucius, how go your plans with the Ministry?" Voldemort purred.

"They go well, my Lord," Lucius replied, edging back a bit.

"Wonnrrrrnderful." Voldemort stretched out. "Severus, how go your plans at the school?"

"As well as can be expected in light of the fact that I have to get things past the old fool, my lord," Snape answered, glad that he'd thought to smear his upper lip with peppermint oil.

"Excellent."

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Back at the stately Weasley residence, Ron was having a heart to heart with his father. It was a conversation he'd regret having till his dying day.

"Son," Arthur began, putting a fatherly hand on Ron's shoulder. "I'm going to give you the same advice I gave your older brothers when they came of age."

"Yeah, dad?"

"Don't go down to the Hogs Head on Friday nights because you'll run into Dumbledore and Snape, then Dumbledore will suggest that you come back to the castle with him so you can take turns pounding Professor Snape's 'tight butt' and you have no idea how awkward it gets the next morning when you come home and your wife asks you to explain where you were all night."

"What?"

"Err . . . I said you have no idea how awkward it gets when you say no and have to explain to your wife what happened," Arthur said nervously.

"Kinda ruins the point of sleeping through class, doesn't it?" Ron asked with a frown. "Don't think I'd enjoy it if I knew I'd be learning something."

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While Ron was getting severely traumatized, Harry was in the Forbidden Forest completing his second ritual.

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"Do you think it's because the master doesn't have a nose?" One of the Death Eaters asked the other.

"I don't know. Do you think there's a way we could subtly teach the master a few dozen personal hygiene charms?"



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"Hey, Harry. How bout a little vitamin A?" Dean asked, holding up a bottle of Gin.

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Harry looked down at the business card the small blond girl had handed him.

"Luna Lovegood: Super Genius," he read aloud.

"It has come to my attention that you are engaged in the practice of performing performance enhancing rituals," the small blond said in a monotone. "I have come to offer my aid, support, and participation."

"Huh?"

"You're doing rituals, I wanna help and do it too," Luna explained.

"You won't tell, Hermione?"

"Not until after she figures it out or someone else rats you out first," Luna agreed.

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Harry gets a thick oak wizard staff, it has two large orbs on the top of it.

"Why does your wizard staff have ba . . ." Hermione trailed off when she noticed the look of expectation on Harry's face. "Spheres on the top of it?"

"Those are my big brass orbs of power," Harry replied.

"Harry, I want you to know that you're my best friend," Hermione sighed.

"But?"

"But I really hate you sometimes," the girl finished.

"Will you help me polish my staff?" Harry asked hopefully.

"Oh yeah," Harry moaned. "That's it, just rub the oil into the shaft."

Gets a wig for his staff

Dr. Strange Lovegood

"Doctor?" Hermione asked.

"In Journalism from Cardiff, in Cryptozoology from Miskatonic, and in Political Thaumaturgy from IOU," Luna's father replied absently.

"But . . . but . . ." the girl sputtered.

"But what?"

"You run the Quibbler, why aren't you doing the real news?"

He held up a hand to forestal the angry retort his daughter was about to make. "Why don't you take a look at something for me?" he grabbed a slim newspaper from his desk and handed it to the girl. "Turn to page three."

"This is a tabloid," Hermione protested. "They're . . ."

"Page three," he commanded.

"Fine," she huffed. "But I still don't see what . . ."

"Interesting, isn't it?"

"How'd they find this out?" Hermione demanded.

"Your guess is as good as mine, I've been trying for years to figure out their sources. Hermione, truth is an onion. For every layer you

reveal, there's always another waiting to be lifted. You're muggle born, are you not?"

"Yes."

"What would you have told someone that insisted magic was real before you got your letter?"

"So everything in the Quibbler is real?" Hermione mumbled in shock.

"That is one thing that you will have to determine yourself," he said kindly. "All the Quibbler is, is a record of some of the facts I've managed to ferret out. Are they true or just crumbs dropped to lead me astray? Well, that's something I'd badly like to know myself."

Front Page News

Luna skipped over to the Gryffindor table and collapsed onto the bench next to Harry and Hermione.

"Hello, Harry Potter," she greeted her friend.

"Hello, Luna Lovegood," Harry returned.

Luna pulled a rolled copy of the Daily Prophet out from under her arm. "Why is there a picture of you peeing on Draco's mum on the front page?"

"Because they decided to put the picture of me bugging her on page three," Harry replied calmly.

"Oh." Luna opened up the paper to look only to have it snatched out of her hands by Hermione. "That was rude," she said with a frown. "I'd have given it to you after I was done with it."

"Why are there pictures of you having sex with Narcissa Malfoy in the Daily Prophet?" Hermione demanded shrilly.

"Best birthday present ever, Harry," Ron happily as he sat down on the bench. "Thanks."

"I said I'd get you anything and I always keep my promises," Harry said modestly.

"You know, Harry," Luna began slyly. "My birthday is coming up too."

"What do you want?" Harry asked.

"Pictures of Luna Lovegood loosing her virginity to Harry Potter on the front page of the Quibbler," the blond said eagerly.

"Luna," Hermione gasped.

"Let's see what we can do about that after class today," Harry agreed.

"Harry?" Hermione squeaked. "Uh . . . my birthday's coming up too," she mumbled.

Break Dancing

"Harry is my friend and you treated him rather badly," Luna said with a frown. "I'm quite displeased with you."

"Ms. Lovegood you must understand that . . ."

"I must show you exactly how displeased I am," Luna mused, "and the best way to do that is with an interpretive dance."

A few minutes later, a badly beaten and bleeding Dumbledore looked around his shattered office. "What kind of dancing was that?"

"Break dancing."

Bush Pilot

Hermione felt a spike of adrenaline in her heart as she hopped off off the last rung of the stairs and onto the tarmac. Stepping aside to allow the other passengers by, she took in a deep lung full of the clean Arctic air.

"Hermione!" A familiar male voice called out, causing the girl's eyes to widen.

"Harry!" Hermione squealed. She rushed forward and threw herself into her friend's arms. "How'd you get them to let you onto the runway?"

"I'm tied down a hundred meters away," Harry replied, spinning the girl around. "Mine's the orange and white one with the propeller."

IIIIIIII

"What's that digging into my hip, Harry?"

"Maybe I'm just happy to see you?" He teased, loosening his grip.

"Harry!" she squealed. "Language."

"I'm not sure what you mean," he said innocently. "Was there something dirty about that statement?"

"Why are you wearing a gun?" Hermione gasped, shocked to see a pistol on her friend's hip.

"Mostly because of bears and moose, got another in the plane for the same reason. The bear like to hassle fishermen and to steal kills from hunters, the moose are a ton of bad attitude when the mood takes them, and we're small and crunchy and taste good with catsup," he explained.

"Why are they letting you have it here in the airport?"

"This is Alaska, I'm a pilot, and they know me," Harry laughed. "Let's get your bags stowed and then we can do a bit of shopping before heading to my cabin. You can have about three hundred pounds all together."

"Huh?"

"You, your luggage, and anything you want from the store can weigh three hundred or so pounds. People are good about minding their own business out here but I think it's best not to rub their noses in magic use. Speaking of which, don't count on your wand till you get back home or you've spent a few months here."

"Why not?"

"Spells go a bit wonky till you get the hang of them, further north you go the worse it gets. Think it has something to do with whatever causes the northern lights, not sure though. It's why you had to take a plane rather than a portkey. Transportation magic doesn't work at all up here most of the time and shouldn't be used when it does, less you're willing to risk losing bits every time you nip down to the corner market."

"Oh. I don't need to get anything, we can leave right away," Hermione replied.

"Be a good idea to go shopping anyway, less of course you want to annoy Hedwig."

Hermione raised an eyebrow.

"She absolutely refuses to fly with me and she also insisted on coming here to meet you herself, we leave before she gets . . ." Harry shook his head. "It wouldn't be good. I'm willing to bet that we can convince her to ride back with us, tell her you want a chance to catch up."

IIIIIIII

"Why did you decide to come here anyway?" Hermione asked.

"Lots of reasons; the fact that it's bloody beautiful is the first, the fact that it's hard for people to use magic to drop in is another, the fact that their magic goes wonky while mine works just fine is a third, the fact that I couldn't stay in England without losing my bloody mind, the wide open spaces after growing up in a bloody cupboard, and Hedwig is the last. Was going to go to Africa but the bloody bird

refused to go somewhere so hot, insisted we move some place with a 'comfortable' climate, and here we are."

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"You're safe as I can make you back home. Made a little trip to let Malfoy and the Minister know how distraught I'd be if so much as a hair on your head went out of place

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"Why here? Why not Canada?"

"British government has too much influence with the Canadians, which wouldn't be a problem but Malfoy's got too much influence with the British government. Well, that and the fact that local law enforcement doesn't give a damn if I wipe out a team of trespassing ex-death eaters."

"They don't?"

"Nope, don't even bother investigating after the fifth time it happened either. Be a bit different in Canada."

AN: So here we have a few of the failed fics on my HD. May put up a collection of scenes at some point to clear up some space, may not.

Disclaimer: Why don't you come with me little girl, on a magic carpet ride.

Conversations with Luna

Luna frowned when her owl returned with a very familiar envelope.

"Did you deliver it?" she asked.

The post owl gave a mournful 'hoot' as it returned her letter.

"I see." Luna stared at the owl for a few moments before coming to a decision. "Father, I'm off to rescue or avenge Harry Potter!" she yelled.

"Alright, cabbage, do you want me to set an extra place for dinner?" he called back.

"I believe that we'll be spending the remainder of the summer and possibly a bit of next year on the run!" Luna replied. "So I do not believe that we will be returning for dinner!"

"Alright, have fun!"

"If something happens to me, please remember to avenge my death!" Luna bellowed as she packed.

"I will, carrot, don't forget your killing knife!"

"Where is my pack filled with useful things, father!" Luna asked loudly.

"In the closet where you left it!" he replied.

Luna checked and her pack was indeed in the closet.

"Thank you, father, I shall see you when I see you!"

"Alright, rutabaga, I'll try to remember to henge your beth!"

IIIIIIII



Severus woke up and immediately wished that he hadn't. He was chained, stomach down to some sort of platform and it felt as if he had a rubber ball jammed in his mouth. Either he'd been outed as a spy or one of the other groups had captured him. Either way, he was in for a very uncomfortable end. A quick probe of the tongue confirmed his worst fears, the insurance policy he'd brewed up was gone, he was on his own, time to face his end like a man.

The door opened and one of his more worthless students walked into the room, causing him to stop sobbing like a seven year old girl.

"MMMMMPHH!"

"Good morning, Professor Snape," Luna said with a dazed grin. "Did you sleep well?"

"Mmph mmph mmph!" he tried to paste an appropriate glare on his face to cow the little bitch into releasing him. It might have worked if not for the tear tracks running down his cheeks.

"How wonderful," Luna cheered. "I do hope that you'll forgive me for not offering you any refreshments, but I'm afraid that time is of the essence and your little nap cost us too much of it for the usual pleasantries."

The girl walked back to the door and returned with a large donkey in tow.

"Professor Snape, I would like you to meet my friend, Mister Sodomy Donkey," Luna said, waving at the creature. "I'm sure you can guess what his job is based on his name, but I've found it best not to assume things. His job is to convince you to talk, either by my threatening to use or withhold his services depending on which way your preferences go. Do you understand, Professor Snape?"

"Mmmph," Snape growled.

"I'm not sure that was a yes," Luna mused. "Perhaps you'd like a demonstration before I ask any questions."

"MES MES MES!" Snape squealed through the gag as the donkey tried to mount him.

"Yes you'd like a demonstration or yes you understood?"

"My munder mood!" Snape said frantically.

"Wonderful," Luna giggled. "Mister Sodomy Donkey, I would like to introduce you to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry's Potions Master, Severus Snape. He's the man that you're going to be doing uncomfortable things to if he doesn't answer my questions." Her smile lit up the room. "Now that everyone is acquainted, I think it best we begin."

She ripped the ball gag off Snape's mouth and waited for the man to stop gasping for breath.

"What do you want?" Snape wheezed.

"I wish for you to tell me the location of Harry Potter," Luna replied. "You see, he is my friend and his godfather just died and I really do not think it best for him to be alone. Sadly, others do not agree and have placed poor Harry beyond the reach of my post owl. You are here to help me determine if the inconsiderate individual with an unhealthy interest in young boys that is blocking my mail is a lemon drop fetishist or a closeted seersucker."

"What?" Snape asked dumbly.

The little blonde sighed in exasperation. "You are spying on Dumbledore for Voldemort and spying on Voldemort for Dumbledore. That means that you are ideally placed to answer my question since I only have to kidnap and torture one individual. If I did not select you, I would have been forced to kidnap someone from each side and that would have caused an unacceptable delay in my plans. Now answer my question. Where is Harry?"

"What makes you think I know?" Snape demanded, trying to stall for time.

"The fact that you did not seem aroused by the idea of being sodomized by a donkey makes me suspect that you'll tell me," Luna replied, ignoring the man's question. "If you do not answer the question in the next thirty seconds, you will be. If you do not know the answer, you will forever lose the knowledge of what your rectum feels like when it has not been penetrated by twenty inches of an aroused donkey's member. Do you understand?"

"I understand," Snape squeaked.

"Ten seconds," the girl prompted.

"Number Four Privet Drive, Little Whinging, Surrey!" Snape bellowed.

"On to my next series of questions," Luna cheered. "They pertain to the guard schedule and the wards. I suggest that you hold nothing back or, rest assured, our friend, Mister Sodomy Donkey will hold nothing back."

IIIIIIIIII

Harry had been sitting in his room brooding about all the reasons that his life sucked, when he came across one of the few good things in it. Of course being a teenage boy with nothing to do and a private room it should really come as no surprise.

"Hello, Harry Potter," Luna said with a smile as she crawled through the window dressed as Indiana Jones in a short leather skirt. "How are you doing this summer?"

"Luna?" Harry exclaimed in shock as he quickly buttoned up his pants, wondering if his fantasies had crossed over into full blown hallucinations. "How did you find me?"

"I compelled Professor Snape to tell me your address," Luna replied. "We have fifteen minutes to leave if you wish to leave and fifteen minutes to visit if you wish to stay."

"We've got less time than that if Snape tells Dumbledore that you came to see me," Harry replied as he frantically packed the few things that mattered to him.

"Not to worry, Professor Snape will not be telling anyone what transpired between us. I left my donkey friend behind to guard him while I came here to speak with you," Luna replied in a tone that suggested she believed the matter was settled.

"Um . . ." Harry was unsure of what he was suppose to say to a girl he was currently dreaming about because obviously he'd fallen asleep while rubbing one out.

"I would suggest that you continue packing," Luna prompted. "And I would further suggest that you bring along any item or items that you ever wish to see again." The girl blushed. "I am afraid that I will be forced to do something a bit naughty to cover our tracks, you may feel free to spank me after we escape."

'Yep, definitely dreaming,' Harry decided.

IIIIIIIIII

The Aurors stacked on the door and took a deep breath. The Ministry had finally admitted that the Dark Lord had returned and their task was to take down a member of the bastard's inner circle. They'd gotten a tip that the man would be in the structure, satisfying his carnal urges with an unwilling victim. The grunts and squeals coming from the building indicated their informant had been telling the truth.

The leader of the assault team held up his hand, each finger spread. One by one, he dropped them until only one was left.

"Go go go!" he screamed.

"Aurors, everyone on the ground!" the point man screamed as he took the door. "You're all under a . . . shit, got him, boss, pants down too just like the snitch told us he would be."

The leader of the assault team glanced in and immediately wished he hadn't. "Tack on a charge of cruelty to animals, get that donkey off him, and get him back to headquarters. We'll dump the whole thing in Madame Bones' lap."

"It's Professor Snape," one of the other Aurors announced. "Isn't he supposed to be Dumbledore's spy?"

"He's gonna be in our custody long enough to make him talk no matter what happens," the leader replied.

"He's also never going to be allowed to teach again after this hits the papers," his second added. "Now if you'll excuse me, I have a floo call to make. In a completely unrelated matter, the Prophet pays good money for gossip and drinks are on me."

"How much do they pay for photos?" another Auror asked, fingering his evidence camera.

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Harry watched the flames consume his childhood home for a moment before saying the first thing that came to mind, "I'd say arson is more than a bit naughty."

"The sooner we complete our escape, the sooner you can properly chastise me with a good spanking, and we had better make our escape in the next thirty seconds if we wish to have any hope of success," Luna pointed out.

"Right, let's go."

"Grab my breasts!" Luna commanded.

"What?" Harry asked dumbly, hands already rising to obey.

"My bra is a portkey," Luna explained, proving once again the value of prior planning. "Hurry!"

"Right!" Harry's hands slipped under the girl's blouse and gave her a mighty grope. "Let's go!" And they disappeared with a pop.

The portkey brought them to a richly finished room with thick carpets and stone walls. Harry didn't have a chance to orient himself when he found himself pushed into a chair with a willing girl draped over his lap.

"And now," Luna said as she pulled up her skirt, revealing that she was sans panties. "You must deliver a spanking to punish me for my prior naughtiness."

"Hmmm?" Harry's eyes were locked upon the girl's bare behind admiring how detailed his imagination was. "Did you say something, Luna?"

"My spanking!" the girl said, a bit insistently.

"Right," Harry agreed, bringing his hand down.

"I am not made of glass, Harry." Luna looked up, a frown marring her face. "And I was quite naughty earlier, now if you would care to try again?"

"If I must, I must," Harry agreed, getting into the spirit of things. He brought his palm down again with much greater force resulting in a large smack and squeal. "It doesn't count unless you count," he said calmly, dredging up a bit of childhood unpleasantness. He brought his hand down again. 'I'm much kinkier in my dreams than I thought I was.'

"I am sorry, Harry. One!" Luna squealed. "Two . . . three . . . four . . . five . . ."

IIIIIIIIII

Hermione awoke to find her nose pinched shut, a dainty hand covering her mouth, and an all too cheerful face grinning down at her.

"Good morning, Hermione." Luna released her grip on the other girl's nostrils.

Hermione was dragged into the world of the living to the sound of her friend's inappropriately cheerful voice.

"Luna?" Hermione groaned, she mumbled through the hand. "What are you doing here?"

"I need you to explain an idiom to me," Luna replied. "What exactly does the phrase, fight fire with fire, mean? One would not think that fire would be an appropriate thing to fight other fire with. Even leaving aside the fact that they would seem to be natural allies, one would suppose that water might be more effective." The girl paused. "Unless of course you're fighting a grease fire, but we're not, we're just speaking of a normal fire."

"It means to to use the same or similar methods to defeat your opponent," Hermione replied as she crawled out of bed and began throwing on clothes. "And the use of fire is an excellent way to fight other fires."

"Oh, how so?" Luna asked curiously.

"It's used to fight forest fires. You have a fire and you set smaller controlled fires around it to consume the fuel, when the two fires meet, the second fire has consumed all the fuel and the first fire goes out. Do you understand?"

"It's a bit like having dinner with Ronald?" Luna said slowly. "When you are alone, you may eat whatever you wish. When you are eating with Ronald, you need to try to eat your fill quickly and you must be careful of losing fingers."

"Exactly," Hermione agreed. "Now why did you see the need to ask me that at . . . five in the morning?"

"I was trying to decide if I should try to convince Harry to become a Dark Lord in order to defeat Voldemort," Luna replied.

"Harry's going to become a Dark Lord?" Hermione squawked.

"That remains to be seen," Luna said primly. "What I am doing is gathering the necessary information to allow him to make an informed decision."

"Have a seat, Luna, and tell me everything relevant to this conversation," Hermione ordered.

"I would rather not sit, thank you, Harry gave me a rather spirited spanking and my backside is feeling a bit sore at the moment." An obscene grin appeared on the girl's face as she relived past glories. "No, I don't believe sitting would be in my best interests for at least a few more hours."

"Why did Harry spank you?"

"Because I was quite naughty and deserved it." The girl seemed to enter a trance. "Do you think convincing him to be a Dark Lord would also be naughty?" Luna asked a touch hopefully. "What sort of spanking would that earn me?"

"Where is Harry now?" Hermione sighed. Lovegoods, why did it have to be Lovegoods?

"At a top secret location which I have sworn never to reveal the location of," Luna replied proudly.

"You are going to take me there and the three of us are going to sort this out," Hermione said firmly.

"Won't your parents be cross to find you missing?" Luna wasn't all too sure that she liked having the other girl along, an additional witch implied a corresponding hit to her Harry time.

"I'll just leave a note saying that I'm off to do some studying, they won't even notice I'm gone," Hermione said with a trace of bitterness.



"Hmmm?" Luna stared at the other girl. This was not at all how she pictured family life, not even after growing up with an absent minded father that allowed his daughter all together too much leeway.

"They made a list of things successful couples have before they got married, I'm here so they can cross something off it," Hermione explained. She jotted down a quick note and taped it to her pillow. She wondered how many days it would take them to notice her missing this time, or if they ever would. "Let's go, Luna."

"You aren't going to pack first?" Luna asked, more than a touch put out that she wasn't going to be able to convince the other girl not to infringe upon her Harry time.

"Enchanted pockets, enchanted purse, enchanted pack, and the fact that I'm known by name to people that wish to kill me to annoy Harry combine into being ready to leave at a moment's notice. Now let's go, Luna." The sooner she got to Harry, the sooner she could speak with someone sane and get this whole mess sorted out.

"Alright," Luna agreed. "Grab my breasts!"

"What?" Hermione asked flatly.

"My bra is a portkey," Luna explained.

"That's . . . actually sort of brilliant," Hermione admitted. You were always in contact with it, it was out of sight, and it was unusual enough to escape most cursory searches.

"I know," Luna agreed. It gave her the perfect excuse to have Harry grope her. "Let's go."

"Alright, Luna." She gingerly slipped her hands under the other girl's blouse. "Ready when you are."

The two girls experienced the feeling of being pushed out the universe's sphincter and arrived in Luna's carefully chosen safe house.

Hermione got an odd look on her face when she noticed one of the paintings. "We can't be in the Malf. . . ."

"Shhhhh," Luna shushed the other girl. "Best keep our secret location a secret . . . even from us."

"Whatever you say, Luna," Hermione agreed. There was no way they were where she'd thought they were anyway, it simply wasn't probable.

"Come along," Luna grabbed the older girl by the wrist and strolled down a dozen halls before coming to stop before a large imposing oak door.

"Is Harry in there?"

"He is. Promise me something before you speak with him," Luna asked with an intensity that was a bit frightening.

"What is it?" Hermione stalled.

"Harry is under the impression that he is dreaming, I would prefer it if you did nothing to debase him of that idea," Luna explained, she'd much rather he be debasing her. "He seems much happier without the weight of the world on his shoulders."

"And you want him to be as happy as possible." Hermione let out a slow breath, not noticing her friend's mistake. "I won't lie to Harry, but I also won't try to convince him that he's not dreaming. Good enough?"

"For me, for now," Luna agreed. "Come, Harry is waiting."

IIIIIIIIII

Amelia glared at her underling, hoping that the man would break and flee her office, taking the problem with him.

"I need an answer, boss," the man said nervously.

"Paper."

"Paper . . . of course, that's so much better than plastic. You've done it again, boss."

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Luna was still glaring at Hermione as the two girls filed out of Harry's room.

"I hadn't realized you were the type to enjoy a spanking, Hermione." Luna's eyes were filled with jealousy. That spanking should have been hers!

"I'm not," Hermione admitted, rubbing feeling back into her abused rump.

"Then why did you allow it to happen?" Luna demanded. Not only had the other girl stolen her spanking, but she didn't even appreciate it?

"The spanking, I didn't enjoy all that much for the sake of it, Harry ordering me on his lap and making me count..." The girl shuddered. "Bliss."

"You enjoy being told what to do?" Luna asked in confusion, what were rules but a list of things to ignore, what were orders but more of the same in verbal form?

"I do," Hermione agreed. "People are different, you like getting spanked . . ."

"By Harry," Luna interjected.

"By Harry," Hermione amended. "I enjoy being told what to do . . . by Harry," she admitted.

"It seems we have a problem, Hermione," Luna sighed.

"I would suggest dumping it in Harry's lap and letting him fing.. err, figurethings out," Hermione replied.

"You're just hoping he'll order you do do something smutty," Luna grumbled.

"He might spank us as punishment for not resolving this ourselves," Hermione pointed out.

"And all of the sudden, this doesn't sound like a bad plan at all. For spankings!" Luna cheered.

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Albus glanced at the magical instruments on his shelf that monitored the wards around Harry's home.

"I wonder what catching on fire indicates other than . . ." He shot his familiar a suspicious look. "Have you been playing with matches again, Fawkes?"

"Chirp?" The phoenix shot the old man an innocent look.

"You see, this is exactly why I don't let you have gun powder anymore."

|||||

Harry wrapped an arm around each girl and stared deeply into their eyes.

"What does this mean, in small words this time, Hermione?" Harry asked.

"Think of us as an angel and a devil, sitting on your shoulders," Hermione advised. "But rather than good and evil, we represent order and chaos. I enjoy submitting to your will and obeying your every command, Luna enjoys-"

"Campfires, forest fires, arson, and being spanked," Luna said, draping herself across his lap. "And it's really been too long since I've had one."

|||||||

Amelia pinched the bridge of her nose. Why oh why couldn't these idiots have taken care of things themselves rather than bringing it to her?

"What do you want us to do, boss?" Auror number five asked.

"The papers have already gotten a hold of the story?"

"Yes, boss," the Auror agreed.

"Pictures too?"

"Yes, boss."

"Then you're using whatever you got for giving them the story to buy a new coffee maker for the break room, you can keep whatever is left for yourself," Amelia replied.

"How'd you know we sold the story, boss?"

"I know you were paying for a new coffee maker either way as punishment for dumping this into my lap," Amelia shot back.

"We already bought three boxes of doughnuts with the proceeds, boss."

"God help you if all the ones with chocolate sprinkles have been eaten by the time I get to them," Amelia growled.

"Saved a box for you, boss," the Auror said nervously, handing her the doughnuts.

"Wonderful," Amelia purred, her precious.

"What do you want us to do about Snape, boss?"

"Do what about who now?" Amelia's face was covered in crumbs.  
"Toss him in a dark dank cell and forget about him until someone comes to get him."

"And if someone comes to get him?" the Auror prompted.

"Be sure his bail is set high enough that we can remodel the lounge," she said with a wave as she set upon her third doughnut.

"If no one comes to get him, boss?"

"If no one comes to get him, he's in a cell rotting. He's in a cell rotting, he's not my problem."

"Understood, boss."

IIIIIIII

Snape groaned and looked around his damp, dark cell. From one, even darker corner, several eyes on tentacle-like stalks looked at him.

"Go away," Snape muttered. "That was last story!"

The tentacle monster conveyed sadness with its eyes, but disappeared.

IIIIIIII

Luna carefully put down the tray holding her, Harry's, and Hermione's breakfasts and stepped into the shadows. She'd spotted one of her targets. All that remained now was the capture and torture, a simple thing for a girl of her skills.

The unbalanced Lovegood pulled a bottle of chloroform out of her pocket and carefully soaked her handkerchief. In the chloroform, not the tea, she wasn't going to make that mistake again, not after the embarrassment she'd suffered at her cousin's last birthday party.

"Good morning, Uncle Lucius," she chirped, right before jamming the drug soaked rag into the man's face... or she would have if she'd been about six inches taller.

"Would you like me to bend down a bit, Luna?" Lucius asked, taking a sip of his morning tea. "You seem to be having trouble reaching."

"Yes please. Thank you, Uncle Lucius," Luna agreed.

Lucius took a deep breath and frowned. "Would you mind upping the dose a bit, Luna? I'm afraid this isn't doing much for me."

"I am sorry, Uncle Lucius. I must have forgotten how worldly you were."

"We all make mistakes, Luna."

She dumped half the bottle into the rag and held it up for the man's inspection.

"Much better," he murmured, holding it close to his face and taking in a deep breath. "Thank you, Luna, what a wonderful way to start the . . ."

She stepped out of the way to avoid the falling body. "You are very welcome, Uncle Lucius."

IIIIIIIIII

Hermione's heart was racing when she rushed into Harry's impromptu throne room and gave a deep bow.

"You called for me, Harry?" she gasped.

"I need you to answer a question for me," Harry agreed. "And I need you to be honest."

"As you command, Harry." A shudder racked her frame. "I shall be as honest as possible."

"This isn't a dream, is it?" Harry asked. The boy looked like he was on the verge of panicking.

"I don't know," Hermione admitted. "I don't believe that I'm a figment of your imagination, but would I know if I was? You just have to ask yourself if Luna and I would act like this in real life, would we?"

"On your knees!" Harry growled, assured that it was all just a dream.

"As you command," Hermione gasped, her body shuddering in pleasure. "What do you want me to do now?"

"I'm sure you can figure it out," Harry laughed. "But if you can't, I'm prepared to instruct you in excruciating detail."

"Please do," Hermione begged. "Command me, instruct me, order me, please, Harry."

|||||||

Lucius awoke from his chloroform induced slump to find that he'd been stripped naked, gagged, and tied spread eagle to a saw horse. Was it Wednesday already?

"Good afternoon, Uncle Lucius," Luna said with a bright smile. "How are you doing today?"

"Mmmph," the man grunted through his ball gag.

"Oh, I'm so sorry." The girl blushed a deep red. "Would you care for some refreshments?"

"Mes."

"What would you like?" Luna removed the ball gag for the reply.

"You don't happen to have any scotch, do you?" he asked.

"I am afraid that Harry has been a Dark Lord for a short amount of time, and I have only a limited number of things that I can offer."



"No scotch?"

"Only blends," Luna sighed. "I am sorry, Uncle Lucius, but we have a very low budget and our prior prisoner had execrable tastes."

"Severus?"

"I am afraid so, Uncle Lucius. Please understand that we did not expect to capture you so soon and . . ." the girl trailed off.

"It's alright, Luna," he assured the girl. "I understand all about targets of opportunity. Why don't we move on to the torture?"

"Right," Luna said brightly. "I believe that you know my friend, Mister Sodomy Donkey."

"We've spent many a happy hour together," Lucius sighed in remembrance.

"And I am offering a couple more if you would be willing to share a bit of information," Luna said proudly.

"What would you like to know?"

"For starters, what do you think Aunt Narcissa would like for her birthday?"

"I would suggest getting her some rare flower seeds, she's recently gotten back into gardening, failing that I would suggest getting her a rare plant or a rare tome on gardening." Or a bit of time with Romeo their 'gardener,' a smile appeared on Lucius' face, ah Romeo, such a glorious name, so skilled with his tool, proof positive that not all muggles were bad.

"Thank you, Uncle Lucius."

"Not at all, Luna, was there anything else you wanted to know?" he shot the Sodomy Donkey a lust filled look.

"I have a list, but I could leave you two alone and ask the questions later if you'd like," Luna offered.

"Business before pleasure," Lucius sighed. "What's your first question?"

|||||||

Amelia's headache got worse when someone knocked on her door.

"What is it?" she called out.

"We were having an argument on what sort of coffee maker we should get, Madame Bones," the Auror explained.

"Bob wants an espresso maker, Jim wants a french press, Joe wants a percolator, and Frank wants instant."

"Find an espresso maker that gives reasonable servings and have Frank flogged," Amelia ordered.

"What is a reasonable sized serving, boss?"

Amelia reached into her desk and pulled out her two quart mug. "That constitutes a reasonable sized serving." Along with a handful of headache meds and a couple shots of whiskey.

"Got it, boss."

"Was that all?" Amelia asked hopefully. And was it too much to ask for underlings to show a bit of initiative?

"We also need to know what shop to buy the beans, what color the machine should be, what sort of beans we should get, and what sort of machine we should get."

"Do you need me to have a field trip to the store so we can pick one out together?" Amelia asked sarcastically.

"That'd be great, boss." The Auror stuck his head out the door. "Hey Everyone, Field Trip!"

The mighty cheer that greeted that announcement caused Amelia to sink into a deeper pit of despair.

"Damn it," Amelia groaned. Why couldn't she have chosen a different career?

|||||

Good afternoon, Aunt Narcissa," Luna said politely.

"Luna, I'd heard you were staying at the manor," Narcissa said with a smile. "How are the house elves treating you?"

"The service has been excellent and thank you for allowing us to use the guest house as our dark hideout, Aunt Narcissa," Luna replied.

"Have you seen your Uncle Lucius today? There were some errands I wanted him to run for me."

"I kidnapped him for a round of interrogation and torture earlier today, Aunt Narcissa, I am sorry, I would have waited had I known that you wished him to do something for you," Luna said in remorse.

"Where is he now?"

"With Mister Sodomy Donkey."

"Which means we won't see him for hours," Narcissa sighed. "I suppose I can have those politicians bribed tomorrow."

"I could do it for you if you like, Aunt Narcissa," Luna volunteered.

"That's quite alright, darling, I wouldn't want to annoy your Dark Lord by having you conduct work on someone else's behalf." Narcissa paused. "Speaking of Dark Lords."

"Yes?"

"Have your Uncle Lucius or Cousin Draco teased you about servicing a half-blood?" Narcissa asked.

"No, Aunt Narcissa," Luna replied.

"Good, if they do, remind them that they're doing the same with that half-blood Voldewerk chap they hang around with," Narcissa said. "And then point out that at least Harry had two magical parents, neither of whom was an inbred monster. Well at least his mother wasn't, James made far too many fart jokes to be considered normal."

"I will, Aunt Narcissa, and I believe that he refers to himself as Voldemort," Luna corrected.

"Voldewank, Voldewitch, Voldewhatever," Narcissa sniffed. "Just come to me if you get teased and I'll sort it out."

"I will, Aunt Narcissa, thank you."

"Now what was it you wanted to meet with me about?" Narcissa asked. "I'm sure it wasn't to talk about my problems or your new toy."

"I came to wish you a happy birthday, Aunt Narcissa," Luna replied.

"That's something you rather wish to avoid being reminded of when you get to be my age, Luna, dear," Narcissa sighed.

"It's not every day a witch turns twenty six, Aunt Narcissa," Luna chirped. "I got you a present."

"What did you get me?" Narcissa asked, a smile tugging the corner of her mouth. There was a reason Luna was her favorite niece.

Luna shyly handed a paper packet of seeds to the older woman. Then sighed in relief when her aunt glanced into the package and emitted a girlish squeal.

"Thank you, Luna," Narcissa said with a smile, clutching the seed packet to her chest. "I've been looking for a North American Red Flame to add to my greenhouse for ages."

"Thank Harry, Aunt Narcissa, I was able to persuade him to use his influence to convince the importer to allow us to purchase it at a reasonable price."

\*Flash Back\*

"How much did you say those seeds were again?" Harry asked calmly as he beheaded another garden gnome with a sledge hammer, before looking at the man thoughtfully, enjoying playing the thug in his increasingly fun though strange dream.

"F-free!" the man squealed. "Free of course! Got loads too many of them!"

\*End Flash Back\*

"What did you have to promise in return?" Narcissa asked eagerly. "Details, Luna, details."

"I had to agree to force Cousin Draco to eat a handful of potting soil," Luna replied.

"That's it?" Narcissa seemed to droop in disappointment.

"That's all I had to promise for the favor," Luna corrected. "The smutty details are things I do as a matter of course."

"Doodle." Narcissa clapped her hands. "Tea for us and a large handful of potting soil for my son. Make sure he eats every last bit of it."

"Yes, Mistress Narcissy," the house elf squeaked.

"About these smutty details," Narcissa prompted. "Spare me none of them!"

|||||

Fawkes was doing his best to ignore Dumbledore, something that was becoming more and more difficult as the old man resorted to more extreme measures to get the bird's attention.

"Chirp?" Fawkes sighed.

"Do you know what I just learned, Fawkes?" Dumbledore asked in a too calm voice.

"Chirp chirp chirp?"

"No I did not learn how to suck my own . . . no, I learned that some miscreant set Harry's house on fire. You wouldn't happen to know anything about that, would you, Fawkes?" the old man growled.

"Chirp chirp?"

"I'm asking you because you were the one that set my house on fire, and my office, and my beard, and the Ministry building."

"Chirp chirp chirp!"

"I'm not accusing you of anything, I merely thought that you might have a greater insight that . . ." Dumbledore back peddled.

"Chirp!" the bird interrupted. "Chirp chirp chirp, CHIRP!" and disappeared in a ball of flame, flame that ignited a stack of books that had been placed much too close to the phoenix's perch.

|||||

Luna watched as Hermione waddled up to the couch and eyed it for a moment before laying on her stomach with a book.

"Did you displease Harry and get a spanking?" Luna asked. "If so, what did you do so that I might get my spanking?"

"Harry wanted to try something new so after the spanking, he ordered me to grab my ankles and . . . well, you'll see, he liked it and you're next," Hermione said with a grin. "His eyes were so cold when he ordered me to . . ." She shuddered. "And his voice was so firm and then he grabbed my hair and . . ." Another shudder racked her slender frame.

The conversation cut off when a bird appeared in a great ball of fire.

"Chirp!"

"Hello, Fawkes," Luna greeted the bird. "I trust that Dumbledore's devices are not in any condition to track Harry?"

"Chirp," the bird agreed.

"Wonderful." Luna rubbed her hands together. "Your payment is waiting in the agreed upon place."

"Chirp," the phoenix said happily.

"You are most welcome. Do you mind my asking what you're planning to do with all that gunpowder?"

"Chirp chirp chirp."

"Do you mind giving father notice to set up his camera at a safe place to record your triumph over the tyranny of the Wizengamot?"

"Chirp chirp chirp, chirp! Chirp chirp chirp! Chirp chirp?"

"How passionate," Luna giggled. "And I am quite sure that I will have other odd jobs for you which will give you a chance to earn a better boom."

"Chirp."

"I trust that you're using black powder?" Hermione interjected. "I think I read somewhere that modern smokeless doesn't explode so much

as burn really really fast so I don't think it would work for what I think you want it for."

"Chrip chrip chirp?"

"Of course I gave you black powder," Luna assured the bird.

"Chirp?"

"Any reason you're not using other, more powerful, explosives?" Hermione asked.

"Chirp," Fawkes said with an upraised beak.

"Yes, tradition," Luna agreed. "There's also the fact that black powder is much easier to manufacture."

"Chirp."

"Goodbye." Luna turned back to the other girl. "So you were saying about Harry wanting to try something new?"

"Best to experience it for yourself," Hermione replied.

"Alright, Hermione," Luna agreed. "Do you believe that he will be sufficiently recovered for me to have my turn now?"

"Should be," Hermione agreed.

"Then I shall see you soon unless you would like to watch?"

"I would like Harry to order me to watch," Hermione said, a bit of drool escaping from the corner of her mouth. "That would be oh so naughty."

"And we all know what happens to naughty girls," Harry's voice echoed. "Hermione, come here now!"

"Yes, Harry!" the girl squealed.



|||||

After a too long field trip, Amelia retreated to the safety of her office with her two liter coffee mug half full of coffee. Another knock on the door caused her to put the bottle back into her desk, she'd top the mug off when she was alone.

"What is it?" she bellowed.

"Healer report on Snape, Madame Bones," the lacky replied. "Guy was suffering from a perforated colon, several broken bones, bad teeth . . ."

"Whatever," Amelia belched. "Skip to the part that I need to care about?"

"Treatment took five hundred galleons out of our budget."

"Who ordered him treated?" Amelia demanded. "Damn it, add the price of the treatment to his bail amount plus ten percent . . . fifty galleons," she added after seeing her Auror's blank look. "Make that an even hundred for our trouble which would bring the total up to . . . six hundred galleons extra," she sighed. "Was that all?"

"Yes, boss."

"Good, now get out!" She barely managed to wait until the man was gone before pulling out her whiskey. She didn't know how she'd get through the day without it.

|||||

Lucius looked up as his favorite niece waddled back in to release him.

"Finished already?" he asked in disappointment.

"I am quite willing to let you enjoy Mr. Sodomy donkey's services at a later date if you would be willing to give me your parole," Luna replied. "Oh, and Aunt Narcissa needs you to bribe some politicians for her."

"I'll be back tomorrow after I finish with those politicians," Lucius promised. "Enjoying your time with your new dark lord?"

"Oh my yes, Uncle Lucius, only . . ."

"Yes?" he prompted.

"I would like you to, if you don't mind, give him a few tips on proper buggery," Luna replied.

"How to do or how to get?"

"Do, please, and get for Hermione and me." Luna blushed. "I did not know who else to ask, Uncle Lucius."

"It's alright, Luna." He frowned. "Isn't Hermione the girl that's constantly bettering Draco in academics?"

"Nearly all the girls at Hogwarts are constantly bettering cousin Draco in academics, Uncle Lucius," Luna replied.

"But she's the one he complains about," Lucius sighed. "He was so looking forward to murdering her. Guess now he won't get the chance, what with her being under the protection of your dark lord, pity."

"I seriously doubt that Cousin Draco is technically competent to murder anyone, let alone someone that constantly achieves better than he does in every area save cosmetic charms."

"True. Perils of inbreeding, I suppose."

IIIIIIIIII

Amelia stumbled home, more than a bit sloshed and passed out on the dining room table.

"Is she gonna keep doing that, mum?" Ron asked, staring at the woman who'd interrupted their evening meal.

"Just ignore her," Molly ordered, placing her casserole on the woman's back. "She'll wake up and realize that she's in the wrong house in a few hours."

Who could you call when the nation's chief law enforcement officer had a habit of breaking into your house and passing out on your dinner table? At least it only happened every week or two. Molly didn't know if she'd be able to handle it if it was a nightly thing.

Blissfully unaware of what was going on around her, Amelia snored in peace.

IIIIIIII

Harry was sitting on his throne, using the shivering and scantily clad Hermione as his footstool when the door swung open to admit one of his soon to be dead foes.

"Prepare to die, Lucy," Harry growled, drawing his wand.

"Afraid we'll have to postpone that," Lucius said with a grin. "For one thing, I'm on parole."

"What?"

"It's when someone is your prisoner and you let them out if they promise to be good," Hermione explained.

"Did I order you to talk?" Harry demanded.

"No, Harry," Hermione replied, squeezing her thighs together and shivering.

"Stand up," he ordered. "Feet shoulder width apart, and bend over."

"Perhaps you'd like me to come back at a later time?" Lucius asked with a raised eyebrow. Not that he minded the show, but he preferred paid professionals.

"Sorry." Harry blushed. "What did you want?"

"Luna asked me to give you a few tips on buggery," Lucius explained.

IIIIIIII

Dressed in a tan trench coat, grey fedora, black sunglasses, and with a stepping stool under her left arm. Luna cut a less than imposing figure as she snuck through the scum filled alley ways of wizarding London.

Eyes narrowing as she found her target, the girl cleared her throat.

"Whadda want?" Dumbledore's pet thief demanded.

"I'm told you have pictures of Harry Potter naked for sale?" Luna whispered.

"Yep," the drunk agreed. "Can also get hairs for polyjuice so you can have your own rendezvous with the boy-who-lived, twenty galleons each for the photos and fifty per hair. You got the money?"

In response, Luna held up a leather sack, fat with gold galleons. "I want to inspect the merchandise first," she said.

"Here." Dung handed the girl a small stack of photos.

"These do appear to be naked pictures of Harry," Luna agreed, putting down her step stool.

"We have a deal?" Dung demanded.

"One moment." Luna stepped up on the stool so that she could look the man in the eye. "First, I would like to know if that large imposing Auror behind you is one of your confederates."

"Confedawhats?" The man's eyes widened in alarm. "Auror?" He spun around.

"Thank you for making this so easy," Luna said as she swung the heavy leather bag into the back of the man's head, causing it to make a satisfying 'thunk' sound.

"Hmmm." She looked down at the man, he appeared to be breathing which implied that he'd be more than happy to answer a few rounds of questions. Mister Sodomy Donkey's schedule was already booked which meant she was going to have to find another way to make the man talk.

A woman's work was never done.

IIIIIIII

Harry copied down the last bit of Lucius' advice with a happy grin. This had to be the best, and oddest, dream he'd ever had.

"Got everything?" Lucius asked.

"Yes, thank you, Lucius," Harry agreed.

"Wonderful, don't hesitate to call if you need any other pointers," the man said.

"I won't."

"Now, I did this as a favor to my niece so you don't technically owe me anything, but I was hoping that you'd be grateful enough for my advice to grant me a boon?" Lucius asked hopefully.

"Hermione, translate!" Harry ordered.

"He's hoping that you'll do him a favor even though you don't have to," Hermione explained quickly.

"Depends on the favor," Harry said.

"Luna's promised me another interrogation tomorrow, I was hoping you'd be willing to use your influence to get me another one later this week," Lucius said.

"Sure," Harry agreed. "Now if you'll excuse us, we have things we need to do."

"Of course," Lucius chuckled. "You kids have fun."

"Now then," Harry said, eyes cold. "I believe I had a punishment for you. Assume the position."

"Could you be more specific, please, Harry?" Hermione gasped.

"Feet shoulder width apart, arms out, head up." He grinned. "Now bend over and grab your ankles."

IIIIIIIIII

Dung awoke with a pounding headache and a horrid taste in his mouth, not exactly a new experience. What was a new experience was the fact that he was tied to a saw horse.

"Good morning," the familiar voice of last night's customer said cheerfully. "I trust you slept well? Not many men don't after being clouted in the back of the head by a bag full of galleons."

"What are you going to do to me?" Dung groaned.

"Well, normally I would bring in Mister Sodomy Donkey to give you a good seeing to," Luna replied.

"Mister Sodomy Donkey?" Dung squeaked. He did not like the sound of that one bit.

"Yes, unfortunately, I am afraid that Mr. Sodomy Donkey is off playing with Uncle Lucius at the moment, so I don't have him available to help with the interrogation." Thanks to her uncle's request via Harry, they'd be at it all day tomorrow too. Being a dark minion was hard.

"Thank god . . ."

"Which is why I engaged the services of my new friend, Mister Buggery Bull," Luna continued cheerfully. "Say hello, Mr. Buggery Bull."

"Moo!"

"I'll talk, I'll talk!" Dung squealed. "I'll do anything you want!"

"Want?" Luna scratched her chin. "I don't believe you know anything I wish to know or have anything I wish to have. I brought you here because an alley way was not the proper forum to express my displeasure at your sale of Harry Potter pornography to people other than me."

"I'll make you my sole customer," Dung offered.

"I'm afraid that I'm going to have to decline. You see, the real thing and being your sole customer would not mean that you did not have previous customers which, as I explained, is at the root of my annoyance with you."

"I can get you through the security at Dumbledore's hide out," Dung said quickly. "There's a paper in the lining of my coat that tells the location and lists all the defenses, written by the Headmaster himself."

"Hmmmm." Luna cut out the lining of the man's coat to reveal that he was telling the truth. "So you can."

"So you'll let me go?" Dung asked hopefully.

"So I'll give you some privacy," Luna chirped. "He's all yours, Mr. Buggery Bull."

"MOOOOOOOOO!" The beast's tongue lolled out of the side of his mouth as his eyes lit up with unholy lust.

Luna walked out of the room, marveling at the way the sound proofing completely dampened the sounds of the man screaming. Time to send in another anonymous tip, she checked the clock, later.

The stamina potions she'd fed her new friend wouldn't wear off for another twelve hours, it'd be a shame to waste them.

Whistling a happy tune, Luna skipped back to the Malfoy guest house for her morning union with Harry.

|||||||

Dumbledore looked around the secret headquarters of the secret Order of the secret Phoenix with a confused frown. There seemed to be something different about the place, now if he could only figure out what.

The old man walked over to his chair and sat down to have a think about it and promptly fell to the floor due at least in part to the fact that neither his chair nor the table was in the room.

"Someone must have taken everything in the house out to be cleaned," the Headmaster said to himself. He tried to get up. "Is anyone out there?" he called out. "I've fallen and I can't get up."

|||||||

Luna carefully put on her domino mask before grabbing a pinch of floo powder and tossing it into the fire.

"Magical Law Enforcement, Auror Department."

"This is Auror Ross, what can I do for you on this lovely afternoon?"

"It's me again, the anonymous informer," Luna chirped.

"Ah, got information for us?" the Auror asked eagerly.

"Yes, I've got another criminal to inform upon. He's in the same place as last time," Luna reported.

"Another Death Eater?"



"A thief, peeping tom, pornographer, and all around nasty individual." Luna grinned. "Simply tell him that if he does not confess to a number of crimes, that you will have no reason to remove him from his current predicament and I am sure that he will be happy to give you all the details you could hope for."

AN: Just trying to clean my HD up a bit by posting some of these half written fics.

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Typo by Sheya

Beta by: dogbertcarroll

Brutal grammar war conducted by Larry Fontenot

Typos by fribergken, Ordieth, Ronnie McMains II, Torrey Jones

Scenes by meteoricshipyards

Unused idea by Donald Engelmann

And when mr. Buggery Bull is busy luna can bring in Mr. Erectile Elephant and Mr. Gallaventing Giraffe to help out...

Omake by canoncansodoff

"Luna?"

"Yes, Hermione?"

"I want to apologize for being cross with you earlier today."

"Oh, okay."

"Because after I thought about it for a little while, it makes perfect sense."

"What does?"

"The fact that you've charmed your bra to act as an emergency portkey."

"Erm...okay."

"A brilliant idea, actually...I mean, to make a portkey out of something unexpected."

"Unexpected?"

"Yes, certainly. You wouldn't expect needing to grope somebody's breasts to activate a portkey, would you?"

"You wouldn't?"

"No, you wouldn't. And while there are spells designed to take a wizard's wand away from them, there isn't a comparable spell to strip off a witch's bra, right?"

"Not as far as you know."

"So it might be overlooked."

"Unless it's Susan's bra, of course," said Luna.

Hermione giggled. "Point taken."

"So will you do mine, too, please?" asked Hermione. "Just to be safe?"

"Okay," said Luna. "You'll need to take off your shirt, though."

"Fair enough."

"Luna?"

"Yes, Hermione?"

"Does the wand movement for the Portus spell really involve rubbing small circles around each of my nipples?"

"Only when your nipples are covered with a bra cup."

"Erm...okay. So what about Harry?"

"You want me to charm Harry's brassiere?"

"No, silly...his boxer shorts."

"Oh, no worries. Did that already."

"Well, that was a lovely dinner," said Hermione, later that night.

"It was, wasn't it?" asked Harry. "Ready to head back?"

Luna nodded as she reached out and grabbed Hermione's shirt covered breasts.

"I'm ready."

"Luna?"

"Yes, Hermione?"

"Is there a reason why you are fondling my breasts instead of yours?"

"Yes."

"And that reason is...?"

"Because it's time to head back?" asked Luna.

"But we each have our own emergency portkeys now."

"Yes, we do."

"So why aren't you using yours?"

"Is there an emergency?" Luna asked.

Hermione chewed on her lower lip for a moment. Then she shrugged, reached out, and stuffed her hand down the front of Harry's trousers.

"Hermione?"

"Yes, Harry?"

"Why do you have your hand down my pants?"

"Because it's time to go back, and it's not an emergency, so I shouldn't use my own emergency portkey."

"Oh...so, Hermione?"

"Yes, Harry?"

"Why grab hold of the inside of my shorts?"

"That's the part that Luna charmed, isn't it?"

"Well, yes it is, actually, but...did she tell you that, or was it a lucky guess?"

"Harry, this is Luna we're talking about."

"Oh, right. Never mind."

"Harry?"

"Yes, Luna?"

"You did want to head back, didn't you?"

Harry snorted, then nodded and reached across the table to cup Luna's breasts.

"Activate on three, then?" he asked.

Luna frowned. "How about forty-two?"

"Erm...Hermione, what do you think?"

The Muggleborn witch waggled her eyebrows as she gave Harry a firm squeeze.

"Oh, alright...as long as we count slow."

Omake by Veive

'I'm afraid I may not be able to answer miss lovegood.'

'Hmm' Luna said absently as she took her wand from behind her ear and stared at it intently for a moment. 'Engorgio' she said after a moment she as she flicked her wand at the donkey.

Snape glanced over his shoulder and began to sneer as the beast remained the same size, until he noticed that the charm had indeed worked, just not on the whole donkey.

The donkey started staring at Luna very intently and braying after a few moments.

'We'll be back in a few moments, professor.' Luna said dreamily. 'Sodomy Donkey gets excited when I do that.'

She led the donkey out of the room. 'What is it Neville?' She asked.

'Are you sure there isn't another way?' Neville asked as he lifted the hood on the enchanted donkey suit.

Luna stared at a spot three feet behind his left eyebrow.

'... right, did you have to use that charm on me? This suit's tight enough as it is!'

'Neville, I'm doing this because I think Harry is being held against his will. Harry is my friend and I'm going to do whatever it takes to save him.'

'Right then.' Neville sighed. 'For Harry.' He said as he lowered the hood again.

They turned and really entered the room where snape was still strapped down.

'Mundigus Fletcher is on wathc and there are no security wards!' Snape cried as they re entered the room.

'There are mail and monitoring wards but nothing to prevent anyone from coming or going.' Sweat lined his face as he stared at Neville the sodomy donkey, who stared stoically back.

'There were protective blood wards when Harry was placed there, but they collapsed years ago! That's all I know, I swear!'

Neville the sodomy donkey snorted and took a step forward.

'Please, have mercy!' Snape sobbed.

'Watch him, sodomy donkey.' Luna said frostily. 'If he tries to get away or I don't come back with Harry, you know what to do.'

Omake by tumshie

"Luna, where did you get a donkey that was into Sodomy?" Hermione asked and Harry was glad she'd expressed what he was thinking.

"I took a leaf out of Grampa Mad-eye's book." she replied, I transfigured Draco.

Omake by Stick97

When Harry asks about Snape:

"Oh, we all came to an agreement. He agreed to keep his schedule quite filled for the foreseeable future and to avoid Dumbledore or escaping." Replied luna.

"And if he doesn't?" Questioned Harry.

"Then he will find his colon filled with 18 inches of Sodomy Donkey's penis in the immediate future" Explained luna.

Harry blinked, shook his head and continued packing.

Omake by Duraiken

(Very much liking the way this is coming together. Had a thought earlier, have a snippet of omake ready. Hope you enjoy. Takes place after Harry finds out Luna tortured Snape.)

"You know Luna, I think you've fulfilled a long held fantasy held by all the students of Hogwarts and at least a few of the teachers."

"Do you mean convincing you to tightly grab my breasts and give good grope when  
you activated my portkey?"

"... I sincerely hope not. That would things about the male population of Hogwarts thAt I really don't want to think about. I was referring to torturing Snape."

"Oh, was that all?"

Omake by slickrcbd

"It was over. The Dark Lord and the Pureblood Supremacists were all dead or powerless, having been defeated by incredible, never before seen feats of magic by Harry Potter, who was hailed as the greatest mage since Merlin, and possibly surpassing him. He was widely reputed to do 6 impossible things before breakfast, at least things impossible for anyone else under what they had believed the laws of magic to be. It was almost like whatever he dreamed was possible, became possible.

The Ministry and its bigoted, outdated ways had been overthrown, and Harry was being crowned King Harry the First, king of all

magicals. He took his place on his thrown, with his wives, Hermione Potter and Luna Black, with his kinky submissive mistress/slave Ginny chained at his feat in a Princess Leia slave girl outfit. (  
/gamers/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Star-Wars-Jabba-the-Hutt\_ )

After bring crowned King of all magicals, Harry was left alone with his wives and mistress. Turning to Hermione, he said "Hermione, this is the best dream ever. I'm just afraid of what happens when I wake up and have to go back to living under Dumbledore's thumb and worrying about Voldemort in the real world. I wish I could remain in this dream with you, Luna, and Ginny forever".

Afterwards, Harry excused himself to visit the "little king's room", when Hermione said to the others "He still thinks it's a dream. How do we convince him it's reality now? He'd never believe it. I don't believe it. Part of me thinks I'm the one whose dreaming". Ginny could only agree.

Luna smiled dreamlily and said "It just goes to show that if you believe in yourself and set your mind to it, anything is possible.

Especially if you're magical and are willing to truly believe that anything is possible, your magic can make it so."

Additional omake by: Dogbertcarroll

"Voldemort!" Harry snarled, drawing his wand.

"Morning, Harry," Voldemort replied cheerfully. "Sorry this isn't a social call for our usual battle or taunts, as is proper between two dark lords. No, I was just wondering if you could answer a question or two for me and then I'll be out of your hair so you can go back to having your minions service you."

Harry paused and put his wand away. Having his minions service him was a lot more fun than fighting Voldemort. "What did you wish to know?"



"I've kept my ear to the ground and learned of Luna's wonderful pets and I was wondering if you knew where she purchased them from?"

"You finally got a competent minion who actually passes on factual information?" Harry exclaimed in shock.

"Oh yes," Voldemort said proudly. "Obviously he's not really a pureblood, but I'll overlook that for the quality of information he passes on. Short fellow, wears a robe that covers him completely, and all he asks in return is the chance to abuse Draco and Lucy. They enjoy it, so I figured, what the hell!"

"That does sound reasonable," Harry agreed.

"I thought so too. Now back to what I wanted to know... where does Luna find such delightful animals?"

Harry went to the bookcase and opened a book, pulling out a pair of tickets for Voldemort. "Here, they have tours most days. It's called Big Gay Al's Big Gay Animal Park."

Voldemort squealed like a little girl and kissed Harry on the cheek before rushing off.

"Dobby!" Harry called out.

\*Pop\*

"Yes, Harry Potter, Sir?" Dobby said dressed in a robe that was several sizes too big and completely covered him.

Voldemort and Dumbledore both vanished that day, never to be seen again... unless one were to go to a certain animal park of course and knew the pair's animagus forms...

Disclaimer: I know nothing of india that isn't fifty to a hundred years out of date. And yes, much of my knowledge was taken from a book of the same name by a famous hunter of maneaters.

## My India

Petunia's heart skipped a beat when she heard her husband's car pull into the drive, he was early. She used the opportunity presented by the few minutes it would take for Vernon to get out of the car and into the house to check her appearance and to make sure the cupboard's door was securely latched shut.

"I'm home, Pet," Vernon called out with uncharacteristic hesitancy.

"Welcome home, darling," Petunia said, giving him a chaste kiss on the cheek. "Is something the matter?"

"I've been offered a promotion," Vernon announced. It was his immediate superior's way of getting the fat idiot out of his office, the idea had come to the man after someone had lamented the fact that they couldn't have Dursley deported. In another world he'd have put the matter out of his mind, in this one it had simmered for weeks before the solution had come to him. "But it's contingent on accepting a transfer to one of the overseas branches."

"Which one?" Petunia asked.

"India, the company is offering to pay for the move along with a ten thousand pound settling bonus."

"How much more would your pay be?"

He leaned forward and whispered a number into his wife's ear and the couple stared at each other for a few minutes.

"It's an awful lot of money, Vernon," Petunia ventured finally, breaking the silence.

"It is," Vernon agreed. "The problem is Dudley, I won't have him growing up contaminated by a bunch of wogs."

"Of course not," Petunia agreed immediately. "Our Dudders is British bred through and through. We can't let his development be stunted." A thought penetrated her mind, the problem they faced was not a unique one. Generations of British parents in ages past had faced something similar, perhaps they could handle it in the same way their forefathers did? "What if . . ."

"Yes?" He prompted.

"We could have him stay here, get Marge to look after him," Petunia suggested after a bit of dithering, she didn't want to leave her baby behind, but all that extra money could buy him into the best schools in the country. "How much time off are you getting, enough to come home to visit him often?"

"Bloody well better be," Vernon laughed. "No way am I going to spend all my time in that godforsaken place."

And so, the world changed. Marge had been happy to take in her darling nephew while his parents were in exile but had flatly refused to take the other one and so it was the two Dursleys and one Potter that went to India to start a new life. Change is what one makes of it and so each person's view of a new country was quite different from another's

Vernon was not pleased by what he found; it was too hot, the food didn't taste right, the whole damned place was full of wogs and in his words, they "should have never given them their independence, ruddy bastards ruined the place, s'what happens when you give the savages their head." The fact that he was fond of saying his thoughts aloud and where the household staff could hear them may have been one of the reasons why he rarely got any hot water, or why there always seemed to be a touch too much starch in his suits, or why he had a bout of Delhi Belly every week or two. Pity anyone who forgets that their servants aren't just pieces of particularly clever bits of self-mobile furniture.

In contrast to her husband's negative view of their new situation, Petunia was in heaven. She had maids, cooks, drivers, gardeners,

and the wives of the other expat executives to meet with. She was somebody important and the power she held over the staff was addictive.

The third person, the child, adjusted the best of all. Both Dursleys were content to pretend the boy did not exist and one of the first things Petunia had done when they'd arrived was hand the boy to one of the maids with instructions that it be kept out of her sight. Harry's situation abruptly changed and for the first time since the loss of his parents he had enough to eat, a soft place to sleep, and best of all affection. It was like walking through a doorway in hell and coming out in heaven, it was blissful.

While the two Dursleys took advantage of every chance they could manufacture to to nip back to their homeland, they naturally left the boy behind and Harry's memories of his time in England became hazy, indistinct, and not of the sort that would make him wish to return.

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Minerva frowned when the owl returned to her office, perched on a chair, and steadfastly refused to deliver the letter he'd been given.

"Give it back," she ordered. A quick glance at the envelope revealed the problem. "What in the bloody hell is he doing there?" Obviously this called for a more personal approach. The woman walked over to the fireplace and tossed in a pinch of floo powder. "International Portkeys," she called out as she stepped into the flames.

|||||||

Harry was on his belly watching in fascination as his pet mongoose stalked a large rat. He held his breath as the creature darted forward to make its kill.

"Harry," one of his caretakers called out. "You have a visitor."

Curiously, the boy followed the woman back into the house and was presented to an older woman in a strange outfit.

"Hello, Mr. Potter, it has been a long time since I last saw you."

Harry looked up at his visitor for a few moments before a string of foreign words issued from his mouth.

"Speak English for the nice lady," one of the maids chided.

Harry got a sour look on his face and replied in the local tongue.

"He can understand," the maid told McGonagall apologetically. "He's just being difficult."

"I am Minerva McGonagall." She said to the tanned child. "And I've come to offer you a place at the finest school of magic in the world, Hogwarts."

Harry turned to the maid and said something in the local language.

"You can too understand her," the maid replied sharply.

The child frowned and said something else.

"He says to thank you for the offer but he'd really rather stay here," the maid reported.

"What?" Minerva's jaw dropped. "He doesn't want to learn magic?"

"He's quite willing to learn magic, but not if it means he has to go to the United Kingdom. He wants to know if you can recommend a school in India?"

"Where is Petunia?" Minerva sighed, it was going to be one of those days.

To Harry's disgust, the old woman had somehow managed to convince his absentee Aunt to send him back to the bloody UK and the woman's ruddy school. Swearing vengeance upon everyone involved in his exile, Harry gathered up his meager belongings to accompany his kidnapper back to the land of his birth.

Minerva kept a firm grip on the child as the portkey dropped them off in Diagon Alley.

"Come along, Mr. Potter," she said sharply. "We have school supplies to buy."

First she dragged him to a strange bank and then to an assortment of shops where she forced him to purchase item after useless item.

"I suppose you can stay at the Leaky Cauldron till school begins," Minerva said after a moment of thought. "Tom will see that you get on the train. See you in september, Mr. Potter."

The whole bloody place was a culinary wasteland. After a week without a bit of decent food, the boy was starting to fear that he'd starve to death, when, salvation appeared. The door opened to admit an attractive woman in a sari escorting two girls that looked to be about his age. In a flash he was by their side, explaining his problem.

"I'm taking young Harry home with us to get a bit to eat, Tom," the woman called out.

"Alright, Prerna," the bartender agreed.

"Actually. I think I may as well take him for the rest of the week," the woman said after taking another look at Harry's pleading face. "It'll give the girls a chance to make a friend before they get to Hogwarts."

"Just be sure you put him on the train," Tom replied. "I promised McGonagall that he'd get to the castle alright."

"Fine, Tom," the woman agreed. After one check to make sure her daughters hadn't gotten into any mischief, the woman gathered up the children and swept out of the bar. "Do you speak English?" She asked the boy after they'd gone a couple blocks.

"Yes, aunty," Harry agreed.

"Good. And for your future reference, there is a rather good restaurant one block up, we'll be passing it in a minute. It's a bit

expensive and it's not as good as home, but it's the best you're likely to find without making it yourself. Gives you a way to get something the next time you have to stay here."

"Thank you, aunty," Harry said politely.

"You've met my girls. The one on the left is Padma, the one on the right is Parvati."

The girls gave Harry a once over.

"I'm Harry," he introduced himself. His mongoose peaked out of his collar. "And this is, Raj."

Harry swore everlasting gratitude to the Patil family as it was only through their intervention that he was prevented from starving to death and only through their companionship that he was saved from being forced to retreat back into the depths solitude. The too short week was over in a flash and before the boy knew it, he'd been bundled onto a train and was on his way to his education. Seven years in hell, seven years away from home, it seemed like an eternity to the young boy.

IIIIIIIIII

Hermione was hunting through the passenger compartments, looking for a boy's toad, when she heard the strangest thing coming from one of them. It almost sounded like . . . maybe her mum had been right when she'd insisted upon French lessons? Hermione bit her lower lip, it was her worst subject and now she was going to do poorly at Hogwarts because of her lack of language. She counted to ten, in French, and resolved to spend a bit more time on it before opening the door to investigate.

The three children inside did not seem to notice her. Hermione listened to the children chatter at each other for a few minutes before clearing her throat.

"Was that hindi?" she asked nervously.

"It was," one of the girls agreed.

"Is it a required course at Hogwarts?"

The boy said something incomprehensible, causing the two girls to giggle.

"No, it's not," the other girl replied. "Would you like to join us?"

"I would, but I'm helping a boy look for his toad. It's gone missing."

"We haven't seen it," the girl on the left said.

"Come join us after you find it, if you want," the other girl added.

"We've got chakli and chumuri and a lot of other snacks," left girl continued. "Our mum gave us more than we could possibly eat."

"I'll be back as soon as I can," Hermione promised. To the girl's surprise, her trunk appeared next to the other three trunks. "Wow."

"No one ever said magic wasn't useful," left girl giggled.

The boy said something which caused the girl on the right to giggle and the one on the left to slap him on the back of the head.

"What'd he say?" Hermione asked curiously.

"Something that would have had our mum washing our mouths out with soap," the girl replied.

"Oh . . . um . . . I forgot, I'm Hermione," she stammered.

"I'm Padma."

"Parvati, and this is Harry," the girl introduced the lone male. "Don't mind him, he doesn't like to speak English."

"Pleased to meet you all," Hermione said with a wide smile. "I'll be back as soon as I can."



True to her word, the bushy haired girl returned a few minutes later to take her seat.

"One of the Prefects knew a spell to find the toad," the girl explained.

"Eat," one of the other girls prompted. "We really can't get it all and it would be a shame to let it go to waste."

"Thank you," Hermione said, digging in. "This is much better than the shop round the corner from my house."

"Mum made it," left twin replied.

"She says it's cause she doesn't have to pay attention to local tastes," right twin added.

"Da says it's cause of the spices," left twin added. "But he might just be saying that cause that's his business."

|||||||

The room went silent after Harry's name was called and the boy walked up and allowed the hat to be placed on his head.

"Could you try thinking in English?" The Hat asked hopefully. It waited for a few minutes before giving up. "Fine, I have other ways of doing this. How about Slytherin?" It sent the boy an image of a snake and was rewarded with an image of the boy's pet attacking the snake. "I'll take that as a no. Maybe Ravenclaw?" The image it sent of a raven came back with said raven pecking the eye out of a corpse. "I'll take that as a no also. How about Gryffindor?" It sent the boy a lion and got a tiger in return. "Close enough," the Hat sighed. "GRYFFINDOR!"

|||||||

Minerva's joy at seeing the offspring of her two favorite student's in her classroom was short lived. The boy seemed to go through the

motions expected of him, but would not reply in a comprehensible language when asked a question.

"I know you can understand me, Mr. Potter," Minerva said though clenched teeth.

The boy in question replied with something that sounded insulting, causing one of her other first years to break out into giggles.

"You can understand him, Ms. Patil?" Minerva asked.

"Yes, Professor," the girl agreed.

"Good." Minerva's smile turned cold. "What is your next class, Ms. Patil?"

"Potions, Professor," the girl replied.

"Mr. Weasley," Minerva barked.

"Yes, Professor?" Ron asked nervously.

Minerva snatched a parchment off her desk and wrote down a few quick lines. "Give this note to Professor Snape."

"Yes, Professor," the boy agreed.

"Everyone but Ms. Patil and Mr. Potter may go," Minerva said loudly. She waited until the room was clear before carefully closing the door and raising up a privacy charm. "Ms. Patil, please be good enough to translate for me."

"Yes, Professor," the girl agreed.

"I know that you can understand me, Mr. Potter." Minerva paused to allow the girl to repeat her words in Hindi. "And I know that you can speak English."

The boy just glared at her.

"Why are you being so difficult?" Minerva asked.

The boy let loose a long torrent of words before his translator had a chance to relay.

"Well?" Minerva prompted.

"He says you took him away from home and brought him here where the food's bad, it's too cold, it rains too much, everyone smells funny, he has to wear a stupid dress . . . um, there's a lot more."

"Thank you, Ms. Patil." Minerva sighed. "What do you want, Mr. Potter?"

The two children looked thoughtful for a moment before launching into a furious conversation.

"Ms. Patil?" Minerva interjected during a lull.

"Could we bring my sister here?" The girl asked sweetly.

"Why?"

"Um . . ." the girl blushed. "I'm not . . . uh . . . I grew up in England, Professor. My Hindi isn't the best and my parents are from a different part of India than Harry is. Hindi is my third language, but it's the only one we share."

"Your sister's is better?"

"Not better, but it's easier if there's two of us to try to puzzle out the difficult words."

Harry and Parvati smiled at each other. They were both aware of how important the boy was to the English wizards, being the daughter of a merchant Parvati was well aware of what you did when you controlled access to something of value.

"You called for me, Professor?" Padma said as she walked into the room.

"I did," Minerva agreed.

"I need your help to translate for Harry," Parvati explained.

"Ah."

The three children launched into a furious discussion drawing to a close after a few minutes when Padma pulled out a parchment and quill to make a quick list.

Elected as the group's spokesgirl, Parvati took the parchment and handed it over to her Head of House.

"Harry says that this is the bare minimum for now to get him to start speaking English," Parvati announced.

"What is his definition of edible food?"

"Food from back home," Parvati replied. "He says that he's willing to make an effort to blend in and that does include eating the local cousine . . ."

"Cuisine," Minerva corrected automatically.

"Cuisine," Parvati agreed. "But that he's not willing to take it to the point that he'll starve to death."

Minerva's eyes flicked to the second entry. "Why does he want your sister to be given full access to the Gryffindor tower?" Minerva demanded.

"He says it's so he can have a civilized conversation and that if he's going to be forced to use English during classes, he's damn well not going to use it outside them."

"Language," Minerva chided.

"Sorry, Professor," the girl said with a blush. "But it was the closest translation I could make."

The woman's eyes narrowed when the boy mumbled something that caused one of the sisters reached forward to slap the boy on the back of the head and the other to dissolve into a fit of giggles.

"Language, Mr. Potter," Minerva barked. "I shall speak with the Headmaster about your demands, in return I have a few of my own. The first is that you abstain from using filthy words no matter what language you are speaking. Hogwarts graduates are expected to be ladies and gentlemen, not merely witches and wizards."

"Yes, Professor," the boy agreed, uttering the first words the woman could comprehend.

"Good."

AN: Been meaning to write this for a while, a ficlet by Troy Guffey posted on my group along with a fic by canoncansodoff have pushed me into writing a bit more of it.

Basic Idea is:

Vernon gets transferred to India

Dudley stays with Marge so that he isn't contaminated, Harry does not, and he's placed into the care of the servants. Grows up speaking Hindi and learning the local culture from the servants, immediately takes to the Patils as they're the only sign of home

Ideas by: danashort, Ed Becerra

Correction by Tommy King

Omake Snape

Minerva looked up when the door to her office burst open and one of the oh so useful Patil twins darted in.

"What is it?" Minerva asked, her heart rate spiked when she saw the state the breathless girl had worked herself into.

"Snape hexed Harry," Parvati gasped.

"What! Is Mr. Potter alright?"

"I don't know," Parvati was on the verge of tears. "Snape won't let us take him to the hospital wing."

"You may tell me what happened on our way down," Minerva decided.

"Yes, Professor," the girl agreed.

"Hold still, I'm going to cast a spell on you to allow you to keep up with me," Minerva commanded, taking out her wand. A quick flick and the girl was floating at her side. "Speak."

"Snape asked Harry a bunch of questions and then insulted him when he didn't know the answers," Parvati began. "Then he insulted him about not showing up to the first class, said some really vile things about Harry, about Harry's Da, and about the worthless snots that had raised him."

"What happened next?" Minerva winced, this had the makings of something very bad.

"Harry said something rather rude in Hindi and got up to leave. Said, in English, that the school couldn't give him enough to make him deal with a petty bully like Snape and that he was going home."

"I take it that Snape was less than pleased?"

"He turned purple and started screaming at Harry," Parvati confirmed. "Harry just ignored him and packed up his things. Snape cursed him when he got to the door. Hermione started screaming then, demanded that Snape let us take Harry to the Hospital Wing and told him that we were all going to file complaints against him and get him arrested. Snape started screaming back and threatening to hex her too if she didn't . . . um . . . 'shut her stupid bint mouth and sit down with the other Griffindor sluts' and, um, there was more than that but I slipped out since he was distracted and came running to you."

"Very good, Ms. Patil, one hundred points to Gryffindor plus whatever Snape has taken off the house today."

"Thank you, Professor," Parvati replied.

Minerva canceled her spell when she got to the Potions hall and looked the girl in the eye. "Stay here, I shall be back in a moment."

"What if you're not?" Parvati asked nervously.

"If I do not send for you in five minutes or if you see Snape in the hall, you are to run to Professor Flitwick and tell him what happened."

"I will, Professor."

IIIIIIII

Albus rubbed the bridge of his nose, it was going to be one of those days.

"Now, Minerva, I'm sure it's not as bad as all that. I'm sure you understand that . . ."

"He hexed a student," McGonagall interrupted. "If that was the only thing he did, it would be bad enough, but he hexed Harry Bloody Potter. If nothing else, his stupidity should be reason enough to have him dismissed."

"I refused to coddle that spoiled brat and this is . . ."

"Because of you, Harry Potter may well return to India for good," Minerva barked.

"No loss," Snape sneered, pleased by the idea.

"Will the public or the Ministry agree with you?" Minerva shot back. "What do you suppose they'll do to the man that chased off their savior?"

Snape turned a deathly pale at the thought.

"I'm sure it's not as bad as all that," Dumbledore interjected, seeking to take control of the situation. "We'll simply tell Mr. Potter that he'd normally be expelled for his actions but that it was decided to be lenient."

"Hoping to shield Snape by punishing the boy to make the bloody idiot's actions seem justifiable?" Minerva laughed. "Might work with most of the students, but not with Mr. Potter. Get it through your head, Albus, he does not want to be here. Our meeting about him was to keep him from running out of the school. You do what you're suggesting and we'll lose the boy forever."

"What do you think I should do?" Dumbledore grumbled. "I think you'll find it easy to criticize, but much more difficult to think of solutions, Minerva."

"I'd suggest you immediately dismiss Snape and refer the matter to the Department of Magical Law Enforcement," Minerva replied. "Showing that we take assaults on the students by members of the staff seriously will provide protection to Hogwarts and may well give me enough ammunition to convince young Mr. Potter to stay."

AN: Inspired by a comment made by agnar. An additional note on motivation; Snape is a petty bully but the spell he used to restrain Harry is fairly harmless, even if he wanted to kill Harry he wouldn't do it in public. McGonagall went to all that trouble to get and keep Harry and is more than a bit annoyed at the others for ruining all that. Dumbledore is the master of his domain and is doing his best to protect his empire, cover your ass is the phrase of the day.



Ore No Nihon

Every eye in the neighborhood turned to watch number four as a limo pulled to a stop and the doors opened to reveal an old Japanese man dressed in a business suit.

With the assistance of one of his large bodyguards, the old man levered himself out of the back seat and made the slow, painful journey to the door.

"Ring the bell," the old man ordered.

The bodyguard complied, a hint of a tattoo exposing itself on his wrist as he reached forward.

The door opened to reveal the pinched face of Petunia Dursley. "Thank you for coming."

"My debt to you has been paid, Petunia," the old man announced. "Why have you called me here?"

"To give you a chance to repay the portion of your debt that my sister inherited," Petunia replied. "And to pay off whatever I owed her."

"Wait outside until I call for you," the old man ordered. He followed the woman into the house and collapsed onto one of the chairs. "Explain, please."

"My sister was murdered along with her husband," Petunia replied.

"You wish me to arrange vengeance?"

"I wish you to look after her son. He's . . . Vernon doesn't approve of the sort of people my sister was. It would be best if he were raised somewhere else," Petunia admitted.

"Bring the boy to me," the old man ordered.

Petunia rushed out of the room and returned with a one year old child in her arms. "Here he is."

The old man inspected the boy for a few seconds. "Give him and anything that belongs to the child to my man outside. This repays my debt to your family, I do not believe we will have a reason to see each other again."

"Thank you," Petunia whispered.

The old man forced himself up and walked out of the house without a speaking another word until he was back in his limo and on the way to the airport.

"I want you to find a playmate for young Harry," the old man ordered. "One that can double as a bodyguard if need be. I also wish him to have a nanny from his homeland so that he may go back when he comes of age."

"Yes, sir. Where do you wish us to put him, sir?"

"We have a house in Hokkaido, do we not?"

"We do, sir. It is currently unoccupied."

"Put him there and put it in his name. I want him to have the finest education available until he leaves our care."

"You are aware of what his mother was, sir?"

"Arrange that sort of instructor too, if you can find them."

"Yes, sir."

"I will inspect the child in six months and once every six months after that, see that I am not disappointed by what I find."

"Sir!"

Harry had a happy, if odd, childhood.

Though never starved for affection, spending his life surrounded by friends and never living more than one meter from his constant companion. It was a rare thing for the boy to have much human contact aside from his nanny, an occasional instructor, and the visit from his benefactor every six months to check his progress.

That all changed one day when a letter appeared, or rather when the man delivering the letter appeared.

|||||

It had taken Hagrid almost two weeks to follow the trail to the northern most island of Japan to deliver his message. As he walked up the path to the giant gates that marked the entrance to the boy's home, the forest went quiet and every one of the visible animals seemed to be focused on him.

Shaking off that bit of oddity with the long familiarity of one who has never had a normal moment in their life, the man walked up the path and raised a massive hand to knock on the gate.

Before he could strike it, the gate swung open to reveal a short woman with black hair tied in a severe bun and a pinched face.

Shaking his head to indicate that he did not understand a word that was coming from her mouth, Hagrid pulled out a dictionary and flipped through it for a few seconds before finding something and pointing it out to the woman who'd confronted him.

"I was raised in London," the woman said after a glance at the book.

"Ah, good. Woudda got 'ere sooner, but I had ta find out where you were from the Dursleys and then it took me a bit ta find you in this 'ere country," the giant man explained.

"Who are you?" Harry's nanny demanded.

"Forgot ta introduce ma'self. Ah'm Rubeus Hagrid, 'ogwarts' groundskeeper and keeper of the keys. I'm 'ere to deliver Harry's

acceptance letter." The man's hand disappeared into his pocket and emerged a few seconds later clutching a grubby envelope.

The animals seemed to relax after it seemed that the man presented no threat to their charge.

The woman's eyes flicked to the letter for a few moments before she relaxed and gave a short nod.

"I see, I have been expecting you," she said.

"You 'ave?" Hagrid asked in surprise, putting the letter back into his pocket.

"We have had Harry tutored in the magical arts for some time now, though not of the sort taught in your school. It was thought best to focus mainly on the native arts." Not that they hadn't touched upon those taught in the boy's land of birth, along with a dozen others, but that is all they had done, touched upon them.

"Good, that way 'e won' be bored at 'ogwarts," Hagrid rumbled.

"I suppose that is one way of looking at it," the small woman agreed.

Hagrid followed the small woman to a small courtyard where a boy was playing tag with a many tailed fox.

"Harry," the woman called out. "You have a visitor."

The boy and fox immediately stopped their game and walked over to inspect the giant man.

"I'm Harry," the boy introduced himself.

"Rubeus Hagrid, call me Hagrid, Ah'm here to deliver yer 'ogwarts letter," he announced, pulling a grubby envelope out of his pocket and presenting it to the boy.

"Thank you." Harry opened it and began reading.

"Lovely little fox ye' got there," Hagrid said, stooping to inspect the animal.

"Her name is Yoko, she's been with me since I can remember," Harry said, scratching the fox under the chin.

"Gorgeous thing she is. Shame about the tails, though," Hagrid rumbled.

"What about them?" Harry asked.

"Ministry is probably gonna want to cut 'em off her," the half giant explained. "So's the muggles don't get suspicious."

"They can try," Harry replied.

The fox on his shoulder just gave a haughty sniff. As if she'd allow a bunch of smelly apes to destroy her charm point.

"Right." Hagrid was perfectly willing to let sleeping dogs, or in this case foxes lie. "Ah'm also suppsed to take yeh ta Diagon Alley ta get yer school things."

"I shall arrange suitable transport to and from London, but it shall have to be tomorrow. Do you require accommodation, Mr. Hagrid?" Harry's nanny asked.

"Appreciate it," Hagrid agreed.

"Have a seat, please," the woman commanded. "We were just sitting down to our evening meal."

Hagrid was momentarily taken aback by the size of the portion put in front of the young boy until he saw why. The big man watched in approval as Harry divided his meal equally with his constant companion. Not many people shared his love of animals, the boy seemed to be shaping into one of them.

When the meal had finished, the fox left Harry's side and walked into the yard where several animals and many of the household servants were already waiting.

"The half giant wishes to take Harry away from us for his education," the fox announced.

"The thing we must decide is if we should let him," one of the crows replied. "I am in favor of it."

"You would be," Yoko growled. "I am not, I do not like the thought of my Harry cast adrift in a foreign land."

"He will have to grow up some time," the crow retorted. "Besides, he needs an education."

"Something we have been giving him." Yoko glared. "Something you have been in charge of, are you saying that you have been lax in your duties, that a group of barely literate barbarians could provide better?"

IIIIIIIIII

Hagrid awoke with a chill, something almost unique in the big man's experience as even the harshest cold rarely seemed to affect the constitution he'd inherited from his mother. A knock sounded on the door.

"Yeah?" he called out.

The door slid to the side to reveal a kneeling woman with almost colorless skin and platinum hair. "It has been decided that Harry will accompany you back to the land of his birth to complete his education," the woman announced.

"Right pleased ta 'ear that," Hagrid rumbled. He hadn't known that there was any chance the boy would not. "When do you wanna go?"

"Now would be best, before she has a chance to wake up," the woman stated. "It would also permit you to arrive at such a time that the shops would be open."

"Right, gimme five minutes ta get ready."

"Harry shall be waiting at the front gate," the woman replied. She looked up to reveal a pair of cold blue eyes. "You will guard him with your life, you will not permit any harm to come of him, and you will do your best to answer all his questions or this one will be forced to do many unpleasant things to you."

"Ah'd never allow anyone ta hurt a hair on his 'ed," Hagrid replied.

"We have an understanding, then," the woman agreed, sliding the door shut.

|||||

The trip back to England was fascinating for Harry. He'd heard stories about the land of his birth from the nannies, but to actually visit, to have his first real trip to a foreign place, the boy was barely able to contain himself when the portkey deposited them in a busy shopping area.

"Suppose we'd better go to Gringotts first to visit your vault," Hagrid announced.

"Why?"

"So's we have enough gold to buy yer school things," Hagrid replied.

"I've got plenty of gold," Harry said brightly. "Galleons even, my nanny got them for us last night."

"Right clever of her," Hagrid rumbled approvingly. "Better have yer key anyway, not right to keep it from you now that you're old enough."

"Thanks." Harry took the item and reached up with his other hand to nudge what appeared to be a fox fur scarf around his neck. "Wake up, we're here."

The scarf's nose twitched and its face transformed into a picture of haughty annoyance.

"The key to my vault here," Harry announced, holding up the object.

One of the fox's tails twitched and the key vanished.

"She can get it back if you need it, can't she?" Hagrid asked nervously.

"Of course," Harry agreed.

"Dead useful that is," Hagrid laughed. "Guess the first place we should go is . . ." he cut off when he noticed an old man walking up the street. "Olivander's, since that's him coming to open up his shop right now."

"Mr. Potter," the old man greeted the boy. "I was wondering when you would arrive. Here for your wand?"

"I already have a wand," Harry interrupted. And a mirror, and a sword, and a staff, and a dozen other spell foci. His guardian had thought it best for him to be familiar with a wide array of magical schools.

"Let me see it please," the wand crafter requested. "Hmmm. Heartwood from a cherry tree with a handle wrapped in shark skin. What is the core?"

"Tail hair from a possessive kitsune," Harry replied. The tails around his neck tightened a bit at that.

"I see." The wand crafter glanced at the creature on the boy's shoulder. "I expect to hear many interesting tales from your time at Hogwarts, Mr. Potter, many interesting tales."

"So he doesn't need another?" Hagrid asked.



"The one he has should be quite sufficient to meet his needs," Olivander agreed.

"Okay, what d'you wanna get next?" Hagrid asked.

The fox leaned in and seemed to nibble on his ear.

"Could we get something to cure a hangover?" Harry asked.

"What?" Hagrid shot the boy an odd look.

"Yoko had a bit too much to drink last night," Harry explained.

"Ah, know just the place."

After one short stop to procure a cure for his friend, Harry and Hagrid visited a dozen more shops to secure his school supplies and another portkey back to Japan.

"Do you need a return portkey?" the woman at the desk asked.

"He'll need one to get on the Hogwart's Express," Hagrid replied.

"Alright." She slid two copper bracelets across her desk. "This one." She pushed one towards Harry. "Will take you to Japan. This one." She slid the other one towards him. "Will get you on the platform in time to board the Hogwarts Express."

"Thank you," Harry replied. "Ready to go home?"

The fox nodded in reply.

"See you in a few weeks, Hagrid," Harry said before he disappeared.

IIIIIIII

After what seemed like no time at all, Harry and his companion were on the Hogwarts Express as it steamed north towards his new school.

Harry received his second visitor a few hours into the ride, the first had been a snack lady who Harry had been forbidden to purchase anything from after Yoko had inspected her wares and pronounced them not healthy enough for a growing boy. His newest visitor was a buck toothed girl with bushy brown hair asking about a toad.

"Haven't seen it," Harry replied. "Have we, Yoko?"

The fox shook her head, prompting a curious look from the girl.

"I didn't know we were allowed to have pets that weren't on the list?" the buck toothed girl said, staring in fascination at Harry's pet. "What is it?"

"She's a fox," Harry said quickly. He placed a restraining hand on the animal.

"I thought she looked like one," the buck toothed girl agreed. "But I'd never seen one as a pet. Why does she have so many tails?"

"Because she's . . ." Harry tried to think of the best way to phrase his answer, old was probably the wrong word to use. "Amazing."

The many tailed fox puffed her chest out. She was amazing, wasn't she?

"She's so beautiful," the buck toothed girl cooed. She got down on her knees. "Is it okay if I pet her?"

Harry glanced down at the fox. "I think it would be okay," he agreed.

IIIIIIIIII

Harry walked forward after the stern looking woman called his name and allowed her to place the hat onto his head.

"Hmmmm, interesting," the hat muttered. "On the one hand, you don't seem to fear anything, understandable thanks to the friends you've made, I dare say that Tom is in for a rather large surprise if he comes

back. On the other, you place a rather high value on those friendships. Either Hufflepuff or Gryffindor would suit you perfectly."

"Which one has a better view?" Harry asked.

"Gryffindor tower has a rather nice one of the lake, Hufflepuffs have a rather poor one of a stone wall."

"Gryffindor, please."

"Right, then it had better be." The Hat raised its voice, "Gryffindor!"

IIIIIIII

Harry's first week of classes was rather boring, nothing he hadn't already learned to do in a couple other systems of magic. He forced himself to make allowances, not every student had been fortunate enough to grow up with private tutors.

So far, he was quite enjoying his Hogwarts experience which was marred only by an unpleasant blond boy who'd decided to be his rival. After nearly a full second of thought, Harry had chosen to pay the boy as much mind as he paid every other annoyance in his life, none at all. Something that annoyed his self proclaimed rival to no end.

"You can't just ignore me, Potter!" Draco squealed.

"What do you think they'll have for lunch, Yoko?" Harry asked.  
"Maybe we'll get lucky and they'll have some chicken, you like chicken, don't you?"

The fox sniffed, she was of the opinion that none of the things they laughingly labeled food were suitable additions to a growing boy's diet.

"Urinare!"

Harry dodged the other boy's hex and prepared to respond with one of his own when the fox on his shoulder decided to resolve things

herself. One twitch of her tail and Draco was thrown ten feet to impact into the wall with a sickening crunch.

"You shouldn't have done that," Harry hissed.

The fox just raised her chin into the air as another one of her tails twitched to lightly smack Harry in the back of the head. She did not appreciate his tone.

|||||||

Harry's lunch was interrupted by his stern faced Head of House who brought him to the Headmaster's office which was playing host to a number of unfamiliar men.

"I told you, you shouldn't have done that," Harry whispered as the men began shouting at each other about what had happened and suggesting any number of dire fates for the fox on his shoulder.

"I've had quite enough of you lot talking about me as if I weren't here." Every eye in the room turned to regard the fox with a look of extreme shock. "I did what I did to that twit because he was a danger to my Harry. Let it be a warning to the rest of the smelly monkeys infesting this place and let this be a warning to you all, I will not be so forgiving in the future. And stop talking about cutting off my tails, I'm not going to let you do it and I'm starting to worry that your stupidity will infect my Harry."

"What is that thing doing around the boy who lived, Dumbledore?" Fudge hissed.

"I think it would be best to ask it," Dumbledore replied.

"Her," Harry said firmly.

"Yes, her," Dumbledore agreed. "Care to answer the question, Ms. Fox?"

"Someone had to look after him," the fox replied. "You yourself said he needed protection."

"Now who's being talked about like they weren't there," Harry muttered.

"So you're his . . . guardian?" Dumbledore asked slowly.

"I don't see why you're having such trouble figuring it out," the fox sniffed. "You've got that smelly bird cluttering up your office."

"Chirp!" Fawks objected.

"You want a fight, you overgrown peacock?" She growled, tensing up to launch herself at the bird.

"Be nice," Harry admonished.

"I've had enough of this charade," Snape barked, taking a step towards Harry. "All that matters is the fact that that creature harmed my student and . . . aaaaaaahhhhhhhrrrrgggghh. Cobras, cobras, cobras!" the man squealed in fear. The others watched as he fell to the ground and began tearing at his clothes.

"Does anyone else wish to try their luck?" the fox demanded.

"There's no need to resort to violence," Dumbledore said loudly, hoping to calm things down.

"He directed a mental attack towards my Harry, he should count himself lucky that I didn't kill him," the fox replied. "Next time something like that happens, I will not be content to confine myself to illusions. Consider that a warning."

"Why do you call him your Harry?" Dumbledore asked.

"Because he's mine," the fox replied, wrapping her tails protectively around the boy's neck. "Mine to protect, mine to love, mine to care for."

"I think it's best that we handle things internally, Cornelius," Dumbledore stated firmly.

"But what will we tell the press?" Fudge demanded.

"How about we say that Harry Potter's bodyguard was a bit rough when her charge was attacked," one of the Aurors offered. "Mention that the Ministry takes the safety of 'the-boy-who-lived' quite seriously and that the matter is being handled."

"Yes," Fudge agreed, seeing how he could turn the situation to his advantage. He eyed the fox. "It'd be better if we could say it was Ministry employee guarding him."

"I'm perfectly willing to allow you to give me gold to do a job that I would do anyway," the fox announced. "And I'm more than willing to keep my mouth shut about this not having been the state of affairs before if you give me enough."

"I think we can work something out, Miss . . ." Fudge said with a smile.

"Yoko," the fox introduced herself. She leapt off Harry's shoulder and assumed human form. "At a bare minimum I would like my Harry to have his own room in the castle."

The men in the room stared at the kimono clad beauty the animal had become. She had shoulder length black hair and a heart shaped face. She frowned and her hair lightened to a rusty red, her bust expanded, and she grew a couple inches in height. When in Rome, it was probably best to look like the Romans did. With a sigh, she shifted her beautiful kimono into a set of unfashionable student robes.

"Yoko," Harry hissed.

"Your roommates snore and do not seem to know what soap is for, that is not a healthy environment for a young man," she said firmly. "I will not have you catching something from one of them." She knew it had been a mistake to allow the boy to come to the land of barbarians, he could have studied his heritage when he got older, she never should have listened to that damned tengu.

"Of course," Fudge agreed. "We'll say that he's getting it due to the security situation."

"Good, now let's discuss pay. I'm going to need at least enough to bring over our cooks."

"How many do you have?" Fudge asked.

"Two, one for summer and one for winter." She reached over to poke Harry in the side. "I do not like what the diet here is doing to his health."

"We could get that lumped into the budget too, sir," one of the other Aurors whispered. "Along with a couple Ministry people to keep an eye on things."

"Yes." Fudge waved the woman to Snape's recently vacated seat. "Why don't you tell me everything you need and I will tell you what I want in return."

"You want my Harry's support," the fox replied. "You may have some photos with him but I would rather keep him out of politics until he's had another twenty or thirty years to grow."

"Never too early to start looking at a future career though," Fudge interjected. Being known as the boy-who-lived's patron could be quite valuable.

"True." She twitched one of her still visible tails and the boy in question floated out of his seat and into her lap. "That's why you must do good on all of your exams," she explained to the sulking boy. "I would not suggest that he take your job," she said thoughtfully. "As I have a feeling that it would take too much of his time away from me." Something that could never be permitted.

"We'll think of something," Fudge said cheerfully.

"I would also like to get a couple of his other instructors here to supplement his lessons," she added. "There is no physical education classes for one, and I do not understand how anyone expects the

children to learn potions with that smelly creature instructing the class." She poked the still man with the toe of her shoe. "Harry will not be going back to that place."

Dumbledore sighed, he'd told Severus not to go overboard. "Would you be willing to offer time with his potions tutor to the other students?"

"Maybe one or two," the fox allowed. The problem was that the only tolerable barbarians, those who knew what soap was, were female, and thus, something to be regarded with great amounts of suspicion.

AN: Basic idea, Petunia and Lily's father did something to help someone when he was stationed in Japan after WWII. With his death, the debt transferred to Lily and Petunia. Petunia called in the marker to get something, a house, a job for Vernon, something. Lily died before she had a chance so it was transferred to Harry. The old man is a high ranking or the leader of some branch of the Yakuza, doesn't really matter since that won't be explored. This is not a Harry the tough mafia don fic, it's a Harry that has been raised in another culture and comes to Hogwarts with a formidable bodyguard fic.

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Typos by: Larry Fontenot, Jenifer Winterbine, Simon Mountney



## Everybody Loves Luna

### Omake: Advocate

Hermione was aware of her friend's presence for fifteen pages before she decided to acknowledge him. Harry looked a little flustered, so either he'd done something wrong or he wanted a favor, but it was obviously not anything dangerous. In any case, she saw no reason not to make him wait till she finished the chapter, since she had told him she'd be working on a ground breaking research project and not to bug her unless it was important.

"What is it, Harry?" she shot him a flat look. Better to get him to spill things now than to let him beat around the bush and waste time.

"I . . . um . . ." he stammered. "You know how you told me about how it was best to have a barrister in court with you because they were a professional and how if I was putting together a professional Quidditch team, I wouldn't just sweep up whatever drunks were laying around Knockturn alley in the morning and then Ron started screaming about the Canons and . . ."

"I remember," Hermione agreed. "Get to the point, please."

"I need someone to speak on my behalf," Harry blurted.

"What happened?"

"Luna keeps talking me into having sex with her," Harry said with a blush.

"Luna is talking you into having sex with her," Hermione snorted. "What'd she do? Remark what a wonderful idea it was to retire to a broom closet?"

"I didn't say she had a hard time of it," Harry replied. "I just . . . could you come with me and convince her that I'd at least try to have a couple dates first?"

"I'm going back to my book," Hermione announced. "You know where to find me if you have a real problem."

"But I do have a real problem," Harry protested.

"Really?" She fixed him with a glare. "Most boys have the opposite problem you do, offer to trade with one of them. Now if you'll excuse me . . ."

"It's not that simple," Harry replied.

"Isn't it?"

"I have a first edition of Hogwarts a History. It's yours if you help me," Harry offered.

"What year was it printed?" Hermione demanded.

"I don't know, but it's got little pictures in it like one of those old bibles."

"An illuminated manuscript?" she persisted.

"Um . . . maybe?" Harry agreed hesitantly.

"What language is it written in?" she asked, wanting to make sure it wasn't just a cheap foreign print where they'd cut corners.

"English, but like English before spelling was invented," Harry replied.

"So, in return for me aiding you in convincing Luna to try having a meaningful relationship with you that isn't based solely on sex, you will give me a priceless historical artifact in return?" Hermione asked wondering if she'd fallen through a mirror at some point.

"Yes," Harry agreed.

"Where did you find it?"

"Somewhere no one else can go," Harry said mysteriously.

"The Chamber of Secrets," she guessed. "I'm going to want you to take me down there later."

"In return for what?"

"In return for the fact that we've been friends since we were in our first year," she replied.

"But you're making me give you a priceless historical artifact in return for a bit of help," he pointed out.

"You offered it, knowing I couldn't turn it down, and I'm agreeing to drag myself away from a research project that, if successful, could change the way we look at magic in return for helping you deal with something you should really deal with yourself considering the personal nature of your 'problem' with Luna."

"Come on," Harry groaned. "She'll be waiting in the Room of Requirements."

"And just why are you meeting her in such a private place if you don't want to have sex?"

"One, if I don't meet her there; she'll come find me and I'd rather not lose any more points for public shagging. Two, I never said I didn't want to shag her. I just want to try having a meaningful relationship too."

"Let's go," she sighed. "Sooner I take care of this, the sooner I can get back to my research."

Hermione marched to the Room of Requirements to find that Luna was already waiting.

"Harry, you didn't tell me you wanted to spice things up by bringing someone else into our play times," Luna bubbled. She gave the other girl a thorough once over. "I can't say I don't approve of your choice either."

"I'm not here to shag you, Luna," Hermione said calmly.

"Are you here to shag Harry while I watch or to watch while I shag Harry?"

"Neither. I'm here to convince you to stop shagging Harry."

"Now you're just not making any sense. Why else would you come if you didn't want to get involved in shagging in some way?" Luna cocked her head. "One assumes that . . ." she cut off. "Harry, could you wait outside for a bit while Hermione and I discuss things?"

"Sure, Luna," Harry agreed. He was in the hall for ten minutes before the door opened again to reveal a red faced Hermione with her clothes in disarray.

"Oh, she's good."

"But you convinced her to . . ."

"Shut up and come in here, Harry," Hermione growled.

"So you didn't?"

"So she's won this round," Hermione admitted. "But I'm going to go back to the library in a few hours to work on my counter argument. Now shut up and get in here, please."

AN: Bit more mindlessness.

Addition by ubereng

"Cho, I have a problem. And, Hermione couldn't help me"

Addition by wordhammer

Harry waited outside the door to the Room of Requirement. He paced about- his anxiousness wasn't unfounded, of course. These two were his best and smartest female friends and if they had to take their time

to sort out this... miscommunication, then by Merlin, he'd give them that time.

After about twenty minutes, though, Harry began to worry. The magic of the Room prevented any sound from escaping out into the corridor, but Harry had felt what he could only describe as sudden pressure changes over the last few minutes.

Stiffening his courage, he walked up and knocked on the door.

A minute passed.

Just as he was preparing to knock again, Hermione opened the portal a crack. Harry could see that her face was flushed, but she held the door so narrowly open, that all else he could see was that it was quite dark within.

"H-harry. I'm... very sorry to have kept you waiting for so long. Is anyone else out there?"

"No, it's just me-"

Hermione's unclothed arm shot out through the opening and pulled him into the room with a strength that might have toppled Hagrid. Harry found himself being spun in the candlelit shadows until he was facing outward into the room, Hermione standing directly behind him with her arm still clutched tightly around his chest, her fist clenched into a ball at the collar of his robes.

"Hermione? What happened?" Harry peered into the darkness before him. "...and where's Luna?"

Hermione gulped. "I wish I knew. She's here, only we can't see her."

"Then how do you know-?"

Hermione gasped loudly into Harry's ear and then replied, "I can feel her! And just when were you going to mention that she had an interest in both..."

Harry heard Hermione's breath caught in her throat, replaced by humming whine from within. A moment later she exhaled loudly into his ear.

The witch finally finished her sentence, "...sexes!"

"Hermione, I'm standing in front of you, you're standing in front of the door. Just where is Luna?"

His longtime friend held him so tightly with just the one arm that he was beginning to reassess the power of a standard Hermione-hug. This was accompanied by another whine from deep within Hermione's throat.

Luna's voice echoed up from somewhere below them. "I'd say I was about two fingers deep and heading for the third."

"Hermione?"

She whimpered slightly, mumbling, "never saw... I never noticed... how long her fingers are..."

"So you lost the argument, I take it?"

Luna chose to answer for Hermione, as she was busy rapidly gasping and squirming behind Harry's back. "She hasn't lost yet, but I'm sure we'll have plenty of time together to learn our favorite recipes and such. I just don't see the need to rush into things."

Harry wilted slightly (though his lower half was standing so painfully at attention by this point that he was concerned with tearing open his trousers).

"Luna, don't you think this IS rushing into things?"

"On the contrary. Hermione is holding out admirably."

"What?"

Hermione let out a feral roar and spun Harry around. He saw three things in quick succession that he never expected, nor would he ever forget; Hermione was naked. Hermione looked like she was possessed by the Goddess of Lust. Hermione then, in the span of 3.3 seconds, successfully ripped every stitch of his clothing from his body, threw him to the floor and jumped straight onto his hardon.

Between the intervals of Hermione's entire torso bouncing up and down from his viewpoint, Harry could see Luna stand up, just as unclothed as the other two, and gazing down affectionately at the duo in flagrante. She said quite simply, "NOW, she's lost the bet."

Luna then grinned and knelt down on his legs, behind Hermione, her arms snaking around to the front of her torso, making Hermione resemble a pale, four armed succubus.

[Anything after that has been sealed away in his mind for special occasions, like fighting off a kamikaze Dementor horde.]

Omake for 119

(Not to take away from the other Luna Omake, which is superior in my opinion)

Harry was just about to walk up the gangplank and away from his last contract when a voice froze him in his tracks.

"Hello, Harry Potter."

"Luna?"

"Yes," the voice agreed.

"What are you doing here?" Harry turned around to look at the girl.

"I was looking for you." Luna looked down at her feet. "I am sorry that I was not such a good friend during your last year at Hogwarts and I was hoping that you would give me another chance. I promise that if you allow it, I shall endeavor to be as good a friend to you as you have been to me."

"You never stopped being my friend, Luna." He waved her aboard.  
"Come on, it'll be much more comfortable to talk if we're inside."

"Thank you."

She followed him below decks and took a seat in the galley.

"So what can I do for you, Luna?"

"You can allow me to stay with you," Luna replied hopefully. "I know that I am not Ron or Hermione, but I hope that I am enough."

"You're always welcome wherever I am, Luna. But what about your NEWTs and your father?" Harry smiled. "And there is no one I'd rather have you be than Luna Lovegood, be yourself and I'll be happy."

"I . . ." Luna wiped away a happy tear. "I already sat my NEWTs." She smiled at the befuddled look on his face. "I sat them a year early which may have adversely affected my score, but I still managed to take first overall."

"Bet Hermione hated getting pushed into number two."

"I'm sure she would have judging by how she took getting the third place. I got first overall, and first in every subject save history and potions. Daphne Greengrass took first in potions, Hermione took first in History. I also sat more NEWTs than either of them so I placed first by quite a large margin," Luna giggled. "It seems that no one ever told Hermione the secret to scoring more than one hundred in a NEWTs exam, she was quite vexed when she learned why her score was so low in comparison to mine."

"What's the secret?"

"Innovation. You must impress the proctors. I discovered a new creature and documented its habits, that got me a top score in Care. I spent the first half of the runes exam making a puzzle, the proctors spent the second half of the exam failing to solve it. I shared some



theories regarding the unforgivables which took care of charms and defense. I managed a wandless partial self-transfiguration, I explained how an air foil worked, and I cheated my way into the highest divination score ever recorded."

"How'd you do that?"

"The secret to scoring well in divination was to foresee a bit of gold appearing in the proctor's vault. Your score depended on how much."

"You gave a bribe?"

"Oh heavens no, I arranged for one of the proctors to be arrested in the middle of the exam after predicting it. Then, I sighed and asked if my prediction counted or if I'd have to do it again with the assistant proctors. They got the message, and I got the highest score in recorded history."

"Good job. Still doesn't solve the problem of your father."

"Father knows that I shall be away from home for the next year," Luna said quickly. Granted, he was also under the impression that she'd be at Hogwarts but that was his own fault. After all, wasn't he the one that had taught her that a good reporter always confirms their facts? If anyone was to blame for the fact that he'd allowed himself to become sloppy, it certainly wasn't her.

"I guess that takes care of my concerns," Harry agreed.

"Will you take us home now, Harry?" Luna asked hopefully.

"I'm not going back to England," Harry said firmly.

"And I did not ask to you to take me there, I asked you to take me home." Luna bit her lower lip. "Please."

"Alright," Harry agreed. "Let's go home."

"Thank you, Harry."

Omake: Multiplex

"I see." Harry considered what he'd been told for a few moments. "Excuse me." Before turning and jumping through the nearest window. Something that caused no small amount of distress to his classmates due to the fact that they were in Gryffindor tower and the ground was several hundred feet below.

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Minerva was at a loss as she considered her sleeping student. Was it possible that Severus' pettiness and Albus' habit of throwing the boy into life threatening situations had finally worn down the boy's will to live? If so, they were both going to have to get new hobbies, she'd tolerated their torment of one of her students for long enough. They'd had almost seven years to drive Harry to the point that suicide was the answer, she'd do all in her power to make the boy's final months before graduation slightly less dangerous and miserable than the previous sixty five had been.

"Professor McGonagall?" Harry groaned. "What happened?"

"The wards around the tower caught you before you hit the ground and transported you to one of the 'special' rooms in the hospital wing," the woman replied.

"I see."

"Do you mind sharing with me why you chose to leap out the tower window?" she asked gently.

"After hearing what Luna said, I just had to get away as fast as possible and the window was closer than the door," Harry replied. "I just had to escape, I couldn't think about anything else but running as fast and far as possible."

"What did Ms. Lovegood tell you?"

"You know that we've been dating for the last two years, right?"

"I was aware," Minerva agreed. The girl hadn't broken up with him or gotten into the family way had she? Such things were not unknown.

"Well, not to get too personal, but do you know what a nymphomaniac is, Professor?"

"I've heard the term," she replied. "I take it that Ms. Lovegood is rather enthusiastic?"

"That's putting it lightly," Harry agreed. "A normal nymphomaniac is a celibate nun compared to Luna, she's decided that it's her duty to live up to the family name."

"I see." She didn't. "And how did this prompt your flight?"

"She told me about the accident in potions class," Harry explained. "She told me that a bad potion had caused her to multiply." The boy began trembling. "She told me that she and all seven of her new sisters had agreed that the only thing to do was to share me." The boy's trembling was almost uncontrollable. "She told me that . . . I can barely keep up with one Luna, Professor. How am I going to keep up with eight of them?"

"I . . ."

"You gotta help me, Professor!" Harry begged. "They'll kill me, I just can't do it, no man can!"

Omake: Traditional Defense Professors

"Please give a rousing round of applause for our new Defense Professors: Harry Potter and Luna Lovegood," Dumbledore said.

"How in the hell did they get hired?" Aurora whispered to McGonagall. "They're not even out of school yet."

"They were also the only ones that applied," Minerva whispered back.

"Thank you!" Harry said loudly. "First of all, I'd like to say . . ." he dodged a sickly yellow hex and sent several of his own back at the mysterious attacker.

"You'll never leave this castle alive, Potter!" another Harry screamed.

"Come on," the first Harry growled, prompting one of the more unusual duels in Hogwarts' history, if not one of the more unusual duels.

Dumbledore looked over at the boy's co-professor. "Putting on a show for the students to give them an idea about his capability?"

"Hmmm?" Luna blinked at the old man. "No, Harry's making an attempt on the life of Harry Potter. It's a Defense Professor tradition."

"Hmmmwaaa?" Dumbledore sputtered.

"The attacker is young Harry, the defender is old Harry," Luna explained.

"Timeturner?" Minerva asked weakly.

"Oh my yes," Luna agreed. "Young Harry is doing fairly well, but I don't think it's going to work. Old Harry is dueling like he knows all of his opponent's moves before he makes . . ." the girl trailed off. "Perhaps we didn't think this through." She scratched her chin. "I suppose the next attempt goes to me. Professor McGonagall, do you happen to know if it's possible to kill someone with too much sex?"

The later duel between the two would be one of the most unusual ever held in Hogwarts history as Luna put forth a sincere attempt on Harry Potter's life resulting in her being bedridden for a week as Harry had been clever enough to remember to hold into the timeturner and used it to good effect.

Beta by: dogbertcarroll

AN: I've noticed that many people don't bother reading these. It's the only explanation for a lot of the hate mail I get, people not bothering to read the fic seems to be an explanation for more of it.

## The Untitled DC Xover

The first thing that Harry noticed when he regained consciousness was a news stand. The headline was a report about a glowing green man fighting aliens. Either the Statute of Secrecy had been badly fractured, or he wasn't in Kansas anymore.

"Where am I?" Harry mumbled.

"Kansas City," one of the passers by replied. "Did a bit of drinking last night?"

"Something like that," Harry agreed.

"Happens to the best of us," the man said sympathetically.

Two weeks and several attempts to make contact with magical society via getting caught for under-aged sorcery, all of which ended in failure, convinced Harry that he was indeed very far from home. This prompted a mild panic attack that led to the hospitalization of thirty two members of the Purple Gang, the remainder of the gang to the morgue, and Harry slipping out of town in the back of an empty box car.

But he was better now, Harry told himself, calmer and more focused. All he had to do was wait until his friends found a way to bring him back, and if he should happen to pass the time by drifting around watching this world's so called 'super heroes' in action, well who could blame him?

Harry was pulled from his musings by the appearance of several large tattooed men blocking the mouth of the alley he was cutting across.

"You wanna get through here, you gotta pay the toll," the apparent leader of the band said menacingly.

"What toll?" Harry asked dumbly. His fingers wrapped around the comforting grip of his wand. It was so convenient the way this sort of thing seemed to happen every time he started to run low on cash.

Course, an outside observer might point out the fact that Harry was prone to taking midnight strolls through the edges of the less monied parts of town every time his reserves ran low. If only his friends could see him now, they'd be so proud of the way he'd learned to live off the land.

"Gimme yer wallet, boy," the lead thug demanded. "Less you wanna get cut."

"Stupefy," Harry replied, "Stupefy, Stupefy, Stupefy." Harry looked down at the fallen thugs. "Any of you mind if I take your wallets?" he asked politely. "No? Alright then, I really appreciate this donation to the Keep Harry Fed Fund." Harry expertly stripped the thugs and tied them to a lamp post after tossing everything of use or value into his messenger bag of holding. "Now then," he said to himself, "I'm pretty sure I saw a restaurant advertising fresh pie a few blocks back." Mmmm . . . pie.

IIIIIIIIII

The Commissioner rubbed his hands against the biting cold as he waited on the roof of the police station for his 'contact' to arrive.

"You called, Commissioner Gordon?" a gravelly voice announced the arrival of Gotham's greatest detective.

"Patrol car picked up four unconscious men, found them tied to a light pole on the east side."

"So?"

"So the hospital said that there wasn't anything wrong with them," the Commissioner explained. "Then, all of the sudden they each woke up with a strange story of a boy hitting them with a strange red light. For no reason of course, though the fact that each one of them had a rap sheet as long as my arm makes me a bit skeptical of that version of events."

"I'll look into it," the gravelly voice promised.

"So you don't have any . . ." the Commissioner trailed off when it became apparent that he was on the roof alone. "I hate it when he does that."

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Batman returned to his lair and immediately set his powerful super computer to work searching for any similar cases.

It appeared that the first reported cases were among the few surviving members of the 'Purple Gang' and that a trail of similar cases had occurred in a number of cities ending in:

"Gotham," Batman growled. 'What was this?' He thought to himself. A misguided new hero that didn't understand the prohibition against lethal force? He examined the morgue photos carefully for clues. Or perhaps a new villain out to make a reputation for themselves?

Whoever it was had better watch their back; The Bat was gunning for them and their time was limited. He didn't tolerate loose cannons in 'his' city.

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Harry had seen a flier for a newly opened exhibit on the treasures of the Egyptian tombs at the Gotham History Museum and he couldn't wait to see it!

It was gonna be one of those days, Harry mused when the windows exploded and a group of heavily armed clowns rushed in. Well, he'd learned his lesson, no going to museums if you didn't want to come face to face with a homicidal madman.

Harry froze as an uncomfortable fact made itself known, make that no learning without coming face to face with a homicidal madman. If four years of Hogwarts had taught him anything . . . Harry frowned.

If all of his life experiences had taught him anything, it was that there was always someone out to kill, maim, or otherwise inconvenience Harry Potter. It was like he was the universes' spittoon or something.



He came back to his senses just in time to see the lead clown pointing a pair of comically large revolvers at a group of school children.

Harry sighed, two quick cutting charms and he'd done his good deed for the day. He glanced around to make sure no one was paying attention before summoning the comically large revolvers. They might come in handy, and it wasn't like the clown would ever be able to use them again. He then remembered that he could turn invisible and belatedly scampered behind a pillar to get his suit on.

"Harley," the insane clown called out, "did I put on my removable hands gag today?"

"I don't think so, Mista J, why?"

"Because my hands have fallen off," the Joker replied with a wave of his arms that sent bright red spurts of arterial blood spraying across the museum.

"Goodness, Mista J. You've been disarmed," Harley said in shock.

"I didn't disarm him," Harry's voice echoed through the room, "I unhanded him."

"Finally a hero that enjoys a proper joke," the Joker laughed, "might I have the name of Gotham's new punisher?"

"No heroes here," Harry said quickly, "I'm allergic to spandex. I'm just a guy on vacation." Granted it wasn't a vacation he'd taken by choice, but those words had just seemed so right.

"Well then let me be the first to welcome you to Gotham," the Joker said grandly with a courtly bow, ignoring the blood poring from his wrists.

"Thank you," Harry replied politely. The sound of sirens told him that it was time to be going. "Uh, you might want to go to the hospital."

"For this?" The Joker waved his arms wildly, spraying a group of hostages with blood. "Tis but a flesh wound."

The museum was rewarded by Harry's booming laugh as he walked out one of the emergency exits. Good to know that at least some of the villains in this world had a decent sense of humor, not like Voldemort's lame obsession with knock knock jokes, or Snape's idiotic puns, or Dumbledore's extra sour lemon drops... Hmmmm.

Only seconds after Harry made his escape, Gotham's dark knight crashed through the skylight to confront the still giggling Joker and his shellshocked gang.

IIIIIIII

The sound of flesh hitting flesh woke Harry from his slumber and he immediately made his displeasure known. "Would you all just shut up?" This is what he got for staying in an abandoned warehouse.

Harry opened his eyes and looked down to find a rather . . . er, odd scene. It seemed that a group of thugs had captured Gotham's caped crusader and tied the man to a chair, Harry thought the ball gag and the jumper cables on the man's nipples were a bit much.

The boy's eyes widened in shock as he realized what he'd stumbled onto. "Sorry," he called down. "Not at my best when I get woken up and if I'd known I was interrupting your romantic moment then I'd have kept my mouth shut."

"This isn't a romantic moment," the lead thug said to the voice in the all concealing shadows.

"It isn't?" Harry asked in shock. Cause that's what it looked like. "Then, Batman didn't pay you guys to . . . er, show him a good time?" Several months of living in slums had broadened the boy's horizons considerably.

"No," the lead thug growled. "We're doing this for ourselves."

"Is that why he fights you guys?" Harry asked, piecing the whole thing together. "Because you have a habit of repeatedly kidnapping and violating him?"

"We aren't going to violate him," the lead thug said with a sigh. "We're going to torture and murder him."

"Boss," one of the other thugs held up his hand. "It's nothing worse than any of us have done in prison before and just think of how popular a video of that would be with the rest of the boys."

"Right," the chief thug agreed. "You lot . . ." he trailed off when he noticed that the chair they'd tied Batman to was empty. "Where'd he go?"

"Escaped when you guys were talking about video taping it," Harry said helpfully. "Why don't I just show myself out?"

Harry slipped out of the warehouse and was long gone by the time the Dark Knight had finished off the group of thugs.

Batman glared around the dimly lit space, as if trying to make a scrap of evidence that would reveal the identity of his latest foe appear by sheer will power alone. He'd been so close. Oh well, he only had to be lucky once, the boy had to be lucky every time. Eventually the kid would slip up and then the bat would get him.

Two blocks away, Harry was enjoying an early breakfast at an all night diner.

"You're up early," the waitress commented, pouring the boy a cup of coffee.

"Was having a kip in one of the warehouses down the street and you'll never guess what I saw," Harry replied.

"Oh?" the woman took a closer look at her young customer, run away maybe? Her breath caught, what an adorable pair of green eyes. "You all by yourself, honey?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "Just a bit lost, but I'm sure my friends will find me eventually." If not, well, at least there was no Voldemort in this world.

"I'm sure they will too," she agreed firmly. "Now what did you see?"

"Saw proof that Batman is a deviant pervert," Harry replied. "Guy lets thugs capture him so that they'll uh . . . 'show him a good time' if you know what I mean."

"Oh?" She knew several reporters that would pay good money for a scoop like that. "Tell me more."

"Well, when I woke up they had him tied to a chair with a ball gag in his mouth and jumper cables on his nipples." Harry grinned. "But that's not the best part, you'll never guess what happened next."

"What happened next?" she echoed.

|||||||

Batman set the purple letter down with a perplexed expression on his face.

"Master Bruce, Are you OK?" his manservant Alfred asked carefully, noting how out of sorts his charge looked.

"The common criminal scum I hunt have begun to alter their usual torture methods in ways that are a bit worrisome and... I think the Joker just broke up with me," Batman replied, wondering if this was perhaps a hallucination brought on by exposure to too much Fear toxin and Joker gas.

"Oh Dear," Alfred muttered quietly, deciding that he'd better step up his matchmaking attempts without Bruce's knowledge or there would be no next generation of Waynes to care for. 'Perhaps Diana needs a bug in her ear about role play and bondage, considering the footage from last night... that might be best.'

|||||||

It was Gotham's newest villain, the leather clad 'Mr. Slave' that convinced Harry it was time to move on. He'd seen all that the city could offer and it was time to see another piece of the world. A piece called, Metropolis.

Which was how he found himself at the Gotham bus station surrounded by a group of faceless thugs on their way to find henching jobs in cities where their virtues weren't in danger of being stolen by the local heroes.

"So let me get this straight," Harry said, trying to understand the whole situation. "This Batman guy used to run around in tights with a young boy, also in tights?"

"Yup," the thug agreed.

"And no one called the police?" Harry demanded. "That's kind of . . . well, I don't want to start any rumors. But it's definitely something that needs to be looked into."

"You know, I never thought of it like that," the big man said slowly. "Makes sense though. Batman's a sexual deviant."

"Bet he gets his kicks from kicking us around," another said with a frown.

"Certainly explains a lot of things," the first thug agreed slowly. "Anyone know what we need to do to file a complaint?"

"I'll have a talk with my parole officer the next time I see him."

"I didn't know you were allowed to leave town if you were on parole?" Harry said thoughtfully.

"All depends if you're a common crook or a professional hench," the big man explained. "Police know that us professionals are model citizens when we're not on the clock so they mostly leave us alone." He rummaged around in his pocket for a few seconds and pulled out a business card. "Here's the name of one of the better agencies."

"Thanks." Harry examined the card carefully.

"It's not a bad life. Plenty of excitement and it's fairly safe aside from the occasional beating by one of the capes."

"Puts food on the table anyway," another agreed.

"I'll keep it in mind," Harry promised.

"Just be sure to go through the new member orientation," the big man said firmly. "Let's you know the important things like which villains like to randomly shoot underlings and what not."

"I will," Harry said with a nod. "And that's my bus. Later, guys."

"Have a good trip, kid."

"You too," Harry replied as he got onto his bus. It wasn't the Hogwarts express and it smelled like urine, not to mention the vomit stains on most of the seats. But as there were no Malfoys or Dursleys around, so Harry counted it as one of the most pleasant trips he'd ever taken.

IIIIIIII

Bruce awoke to the familiar sensation of being bound and gagged. He looked up to see the unfamiliar sight of Wonder Woman dressed in black leather, a sneer on her face and a coiled whip in her right hand.

In one smooth motion, the woman reached down and ripped the gag off his mouth.

"What's going on, Diana?" he demanded in his best scary Batman voice. His hands already working to undo the knots.

"The safety word is banana," she giggled, leaning down to give him a tender kiss. Straightening up, her expression hardened. "You will

address me as Princess, worm!" she barked, punctuating her statement with the crack of a whip.

His hands froze. Perhaps it would be best to let things play out for a bit . . . purely for research purposes of course.

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A tear worked its way down Alfred's wrinkled cheek as he listened to the sounds of debauchery emanating from the master bedroom.

It was as if Master Bruce's parents had been returned to life. He should have arranged things years ago.

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Bruce was speeding down the road and away from his stately mansion as fast as the Bat-mobile would take him. It hadn't been easy, but Batman had managed to escape his bonds when his shapely captor was distracted by other matters.

"I'm not running away from Princess Diana, I'm running towards the bat-signal," he told himself firmly. He shuddered at the thought of the punishment she'd give him for running away. Another thought occurred, how much worse would the punishment be if he was late in getting back? Batman's foot eased off the accelerator for a second before he stomped it back down firmly, any delay now could cost lives later. He'd have plenty of time for that on the way back to the Batcave.

It took a couple minutes to find a parking space at the heart of downtown Gotham as someone had already parked 'Social Services' van in his usual spot.

"You called for me, Commissioner?" Batman growled from the shadows.

"No, they did," the Commissioner said with a wave, indicating a large woman with bad skin and a short sallow bald man.

"Mr. Man," the woman began in a voice that sounded like fingernails on a chalkboard. "We'd like to ask you a few questions about your 'sidekick,' Robin."

"And I'd like to conduct an inspection of your living quarters and those you assigned to the boy," the man added.

"What's this about?" Batman demanded.

"Social Services," the man identified himself.

"And Sex Crimes," the woman said. "There have been some concerns raised about your propensity for dressing young boys in tights. We just have a few things we'd like you to clear up and then we can all put the whole matter behind us."

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Harry stepped off the bus and took his first look at the bustling city of Metropolis. First impression was that it was a much cleaner and brighter place than Gotham, at least on the surface. Time would tell if the cities backstreets and alleyways were any different. Harry certainly hoped not, otherwise he might have to find a new source of income or cut his visit short.

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A cold smile appeared on Bruce's face. It had taken weeks of carefully analyzing footage from dozens of security cameras but finally, he had it. The face of the mysterious man that had given the criminal scum the idea of . . . that is to say, the mysterious man that needed to be stopped for justice to prevail. A few keystrokes and the pictures were sent to every member of the League with orders to arrest and detain. Justice would prevail and maybe then the criminal scum would stop trying to sexually assault the Dark Knight on camera.

The sound of a whip cracking tore him away from his pondering and back to the present.

"Who told you, you could leave, worm?" Diana growled.



Looked like he was in for another long night. Batman ruthlessly suppressed his grin in favor of a dignified silence as he walked away from the computer to meet his fate.

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Clark's eye's widened in shock when he spied the face that had been circulating on the League's latest wanted poster. Sure there wasn't enough evidence to try the boy in a court of law, but trifles like that had never stopped members of the Justice League from doing their duty.

"You're coming with me," the Man of Steel said firmly.

"Stupefy, incarcerous," Harry replied quickly. No way was he going anywhere with a deviant spandex fetishist that wore his underwear on the outside.

Spying a pay phone, Harry decided to do his civic duty. Conveniently the emergency number was printed on the phone and he soon had a police officer on the other end.

"Yeah, I'm a supple young boy and some spandex clad pervert with his underwear on the outside tried to come onto me. Left him tied up about a block away from the phone."

Good deed done, Harry decided to see if there was anywhere good to eat in the local area.

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As it happened, the nearest police car was one carrying a film crew. The officer in the driver's seat turned on the lights and siren while his partner turned to explain what was happening.

"We got a report of a pervert stalking young boys," the police officer told the camera crew that was broadcasting a live version of the show 'Metropolis Justice.'

"According to the call, the freak chose the wrong victim. We're gonna role in and assess the situation."

"Sounds like a real prize too," the first cop added as the pulled onto the street. "Complaint said he was wearing spandex and his underwear on the outside."

"What are you gonna do?" the reporter asked.

"Hook him up and take him to the station, he'll get his day in court like everyone else."

"I see something," the first cop said. "Blue spandex legs, red underwear on the outside and the top half covered in rope."

"Get a close up of the perv," the reporter whispered to the cameraman.

"I don't fucking believe it," the cameraman muttered in shock as he, and the rest of the city, got their first look at the face of the suspected sex offender.

It just wasn't Superman's day.

Eager to show the world that no one was above the law, the police tossed the city's guardian into the back of a paddy wagon and dragged him back to the station for a fun filled night of interrogation.

"You have to let me loose," the Man of Steel said desperately. "There's a dangerous criminal loose in the city and only I can stop him."

"What's this criminal's name?" the interrogating officer demanded.

"Seems to go by the name Harry," Superman replied, quoting the information he'd read in the detain notice.

"Seems to?" the man frowned. "Which jurisdiction issued the arrest warrant?"

"The League issued the detain notice on our own," Superman explained. "Now let me loose."

"What crime did you catch him committing when you attempted to detain him?" the officer asked calmly.

"I didn't . . ." Superman shut his mouth. "I want to speak with my lawyer."

"Tell him you're being charged with; assault, attempted kidnapping, and anything else we can think to tack on," the cop said cheerfully. Sure they'd probably be ordered to cut the bastard loose. In the mean time, it was tremendously satisfying to put one of the bastards that made the department look bad in his place.

IIIIIIIIII

One by one, the members of the Justice League arrived and took their place around the conference table.

"Any idea what this meeting is about?" one of them asked.

"Think it has something to do with Superman's arrest," her neighbor replied.

Several eyebrows raised when Diana, Princess of Themyscira walked into the meeting holding a leather leash in her left hand. Every jaw in the room dropped when Batman followed her in, the leash attached to a studded leather collar around the hero's neck.

"Don't dawdle, worm," Wonder Woman growled.

"Yes, Princess," Bruce agreed quickly. He shot his best glare around the room, daring anyone to say anything.

The meeting finally began when Superman arrived to set the agenda.

"I just got out of jail," the Man of Steel said bluntly. "And the repercussions of my arrest are already being felt."

"When's your court date?"

"I'm not being charged with anything thanks to the fact that my assailant did not stick around to file a complaint," Superman replied. "That has set an unfortunate precedent in Metropolis. The Chief of Police has told me that I'm not to apprehend any criminals unless I catch them in the act or I have a warrant in my hands."

"A small town in Nevada has already made costumed heroics illegal," Batman added. "Several Senators are talking about amending the constitution. Thankfully, they don't have the needed support." Batman allowed his steely eyed glare to sweep over the table. "That's why I think it's imperative to deal with the threat that this 'Harry' presents right now, before he's allowed to cause any more damage."

"What's your plan?" Superman prompted.

"It's simple," Batman began. "In phase one, Flash will . . ."

"What are you, nuts?" the Flash interrupted. "There's no way I'm going after the guy that's defeated and humiliated every superhero that's tried to bring him in. Live and let live, that's my motto."

"Since when?" Batman challenged.

"Since you wanted me to go after the guy that has a habit of defeating and humiliating heroes," Flash shot back. "If I see him, then I'm going to do everything I can to stay on his good side. Not like he's breaking any laws is it?"

"He's suspected of several murders," Batman growled.

"Any proof?" Flash asked quickly. "If so, give it to a judge and get a warrant."

IIIIIIII

Lex was sitting in his office with a wide smile on his face as he stared at the framed newspapers on the wall. There is no joy like schadenfreude, nothing sweeter, nothing more satisfying.

"Sir." His assistant walked into the office. "Our pet Senators report that they don't have enough votes to pass any laws banning superheroes."

"I never expected them to," Lex said flippantly. "Just wanted to ratchet up the tension a bit."

"Of course, sir. While unlikely to take off on the national level, there is a small town that has enacted laws against costumed heroics in Nevada."

"Oh?"

"LexCorp is the only private sector employer."

"I see." Lex laughed. "Make a note to do something nice for this 'Harry' character that's set everything in motion."

"I will, sir."

|||||

A smile lit Alfred's face as he went over the master of the house's confidential medical reports. Master Bruce may complain about the way Princess Diana was treating him, but the proof in how he really felt was in how the man's blood pressure had dropped. Alfred raised an eyebrow at the next piece of information, looked as if Master Bruce was breaking his diet. Well, a word with the Princess would solve that issue.

|||||

Harry decided to cut his time in Metropolis short in favor of a town where he wouldn't get propositioned on the street by men with bizarre sexual fetishes, which was why, ironically, he was headed to Las Vegas.

Harry decided to take things slow, stopping at a number of small towns along the way. He was in some small, no name Kansas town when his propensity for doing good deeds kicked in.

"Need some help?" he asked cheerfully.

The older woman stopped struggling with her groceries to see who'd addressed her. "I'd love some help, young man," she replied after giving him a measured look. "Thank you."

Harry scooped up the woman's bags and gave her a look of expectation.

"It's this way. Normally I'd have Kara help me with this, but she's busy helping my husband today," Martha explained to the nice young boy that had offered to carry her groceries.

"I'm just happy to be useful," Harry said honestly.

Martha spent a few moments to examine the boy, poor dear was all skin and bones. "Do you mind giving me a bit more help?" she asked, making a split decision. "I need to get these things into the house when I get home and if you carry them for me, then I'd be happy to cook lunch for you."

"Deal," Harry agreed. He hadn't had a home cooked meal since the last time he stayed with the Weasleys.

Two hours later, Harry was eating the best meal he'd had in years. Mrs. Weasley was a good cook, the house elves knew how to serve a decent if predictable spread, Martha Kent was an artist.

"So what brings you to Kansas?" Martha asked the boy.

"I'm seeing America," Harry replied.

"Oh?" He had such a marvelous accent, she wondered if it was real. "All by yourself?"

"All by myself."

"Not safe for a young boy like you to be off on your own," Martha scolded. "I've heard what happens to good people in the cities."

"Don't I know it," Harry agreed. "You wouldn't believe the crazies I've met in my travels. This one guy in Metropolis was dressed in a spandex body suit with his underwear on the outside tried to make me go off somewhere with him."

"What happened?" Martha asked in concern.

"I was able to knock him out and tie him up," Harry replied. "Then I called the police."

"Good," the old woman said with a satisfied smile. "Just glad you got away."

"I don't even want to think about what he would have done to someone that couldn't have defended themselves," Harry agreed. "Just glad that pervert is off the streets." He gave a deep burp of satisfaction. "Excuse me."

Martha giggled. "It's good to be appreciated."

"It was the best meal I've had in a long time," Harry assured the woman. The boy stood up and stretched. "Thank you for your hospitality, I'd better get going if I want to get back to town in time."

"Wait a few minutes and I'll give you a ride," Martha ordered. She went back to the kitchen for a few minutes and emerged with a large sack. "Here, for the road."

"I couldn't . . ."

"And I insist," she interrupted. "You'll stunt your growth if you skip too many meals."

"Thank you." Harry smiled.

With a heavy heart, Martha drove her latest stray to the Smallville bus depot.

"Are you sure you can't stay any longer?"

"If I don't leave now, I won't be able to catch the last bus," Harry replied. "But I'll be sure to visit the next time I pass through."

"Good." The old woman waited until the bus arrived and waved goodbye to the boy as he boarded the last bus out of town. With a sigh, she made the drive back to the farm to start dinner.

"We're home," Kara called out.

"Shame you couldn't have gotten back a couple hours ago," Martha sighed. "I met the most darling boy and I'd have loved to introduce you to him."

"A boy?"

"Runaway I think," Martha told her adopted daughter. "He helped me with the groceries so I made him lunch and a bag of sandwiches to take on the trip."

IIIIIIII

Harry awoke early the next morning as the bus pulled into another small town and the cramp in his legs persuaded him that it would be a good idea to stretch them out.

"Where are we?" Harry asked the driver.

"Pleasant Nevada," the driver replied. "Gettin' off?"

"How far to Vegas?"

"Nother five, six hours." People rode buses because of the low price, not the speed.



"I'll catch the next bus," Harry decided. "Thanks for driving me this far."

"No problem, kid."

Harry spent the next two hours exploring the town and was starting to think about finding lunch, when another incident tripped his saving people thing.

"Stop, thief!" an old woman screamed.

Harry turned to see a mountain of muscle barreling towards him. A quick tripping jinx bought him a bit of time to think. A smile appeared on Harry's face. Since he had the time, he might as well be creative.

The cops arrived five minutes later to find the criminal so thoroughly wrapped in rope that it looked as if he'd been the victim of a giant spider, they'd find the more creative bits when they got the first few layers off.

"You know super-heroics are illegal in this town?" the first cop on scene demanded.

"I'm not a superhero, sir," Harry said respectfully. "I'm just passing through on my way to Vegas."

"Why did you stop the purse snatcher then?" a cop demanded harshly.

"I couldn't just stand by and let him hurt that nice old lady," Harry replied, scandalized by the very notion.

"Why'd you use magic?" Seemed like superhero behavior to him.

"No way I was gonna take on that monster without magic." Harry shuddered. "His arms are bigger than my legs."

"Point," the cop sighed. "You're really not a hero?"

"Just a guy on vacation," Harry agreed. "Stopped in town to use the bathroom and get something to eat."

"You eat yet?"

"No, sir."

"Come on then, best diner in town is a bit off the main drag and you'd never find it if you didn't have a local guiding you."

"Thank you."

"Just let me report what happened first." The cop spent a couple minutes speaking to his Sergeant. "It's right this way."

While it wasn't a patch on Mrs. Kent's home cooking, the Diner still provided one of the better meals Harry had eaten in his current dimension. Proving once again that local knowledge is the best kind of knowledge.

"Thanks for showing me this place," Harry said gratefully.

"Thanks for saving that old lady," the cop countered.

"Always happy to help." Harry glanced at the clock. "I'd better get back to the bus station."

"Just a second, the mayor called while you were in the bathroom and asked me to keep you till he gets a chance to meet you."

"I . . ."

"I'll either have them hold the bus or give you a ride to the next town," the cop assured the boy. "Don't worry."

"Okay," Harry agreed.

The mayor, a slimy looking fat man, arrived a few minutes later with a couple reporters in tow.

"Wonderful thing you did, son," he said loudly. "Proving that you don't have to put on a mask to help people if you have powers."

"I just did what anyone would have done," Harry replied modestly.

"Still." He glared at one of the reporters. "Be sure to get us both in this shot."

"Yes, mayor."

"And get that television camera over here."

IIIIIIIIII

A smile lit Martha's face when she found her adopted daughter reading on the couch, shame the girl would soon be leaving the house to establish her independence.

"Mind if I watch the news, dear?"

"Go ahead," Kara replied.

The first story was about a three legged pig named George, the second caused Martha's jaw to drop in shock.

"That's Harry!" Martha exclaimed.

"What?" Kara looked up from her book.

"On the TV," Martha explained. "The boy that helped me with the groceries." The two women watched as the news report continued.

"He knows magic?" Kara said dumbly.

"Guess that's how he dealt with that pervert in Metropolis," Martha said in satisfaction.

"What pervert in Metropolis?"

"Some deviant in spandex with his underwear on the outside tried to proposition poor Harry," Martha replied. "Luckily, he was able to fend him off and escape."

"Why does that sound familiar?" Kara mumbled to herself. "Wait, that's the guy that had Clark arrested!"

"What's this about my boy being arrested?" Martha demanded harshly.

With a sigh, Kara reluctantly explained the entire story to her steaming guardian.

"Where's Clark now?" Martha growled.

"Off planet trying to negotiate a peace treaty," Kara replied.

"Be sure he knows that I want a word with him as soon as he gets back," Martha said firmly. "Understand?"

"I understand," Kara agreed.

"I know I raised that boy better than this," Martha mumbled to herself. "None of that sort of thing on my side of the family."

IIIIIIII

Harry's paranoia tripped when he noticed that there was a man with a suit waiting when Harry's bus arrived in Las Vegas.

"Good evening," the man began kindly. "I'm here to congratulate you for being the one millionth person to ride a LexCorps bus to Las Vegas."

"Wow." Harry grinned, feeling a bit guilty for doubting the man. "Do I win anything?"

"You win ten nights at the fabulous Lexor casino, free trips to the casino buffet, and a date with the lovely Zatanna."

"I don't know what to say," Harry confessed.

"Say thank you and enjoy your stay," the man advised.

"Thank you."

"There's a car waiting outside to take you to your destination," the suit continued.

It was the first time Harry got to ride in the back of a limo, the first time he got to drink champagne, the first time he arrived in his penthouse suite to find a tailor waiting to suit him up for his date. For once in Harry's life, it looked as if the universe wasn't trying to forcibly sodomize him and he intended to enjoy it while it lasted.

"I'll have your suit ready soon, sir," the tailor reported. "The cobbler will be up shortly to get you fitted while the barber gives you a shave and a haircut." Which would normally have cost two bits.

"Okay," Harry agreed, having long since decided to just go with the flow.

What followed was a stream of people going into and out of his new room. Tailors, barbers, manicurists, cobblers, everyone and everything needed to outfit the boy in style. As the sun dipped below the horizon, Harry found himself standing backstage with a bouquet of roses in his hands, waiting for his date's act to finish.

"So, did you enjoy the act?" a soft sultry voice purred.

Harry whirled around in surprise, wand in hand to find a shapely girl with black hair smirking at him. "It was great," Harry croaked, disappearing his wand.

"Jumpy?"

"Waiting for the other shoe to drop," Harry explained. That and no one had tried to kill him for a couple days, that was never a good sign. "Ready for our date?"

"Just let me change out of my stage clothes," Zatanna replied. "Shouldn't take more than five minutes."

"Alright," Harry agreed. He made another sweep of the room to make sure that there were no thugs hiding in the shadows. "I'll be waiting."

Zatanna skipped to her room with a wide smile on her face, it was so cute that he was nervous to go out with her. Nice to know she was still attractive. She threw on the dress her manager had picked out and stepped out to rejoin him.

"Let's try this in the proper clothes this time. I'm Zatanna," she purred.

"Harry," he introduced himself. "Pleased to meet you. Shall we?"

She took his arm. "We shall." A smile appeared on Zatanna's face as Harry escorted her out of the casino, at least he was going to the effort of taking her away from her workplace.

They were about three blocks from the casino when a sudden thought occurred to Harry. "Sorry," he said contritely. "But I forgot to get money on the way here." And Lex's people had forgotten to slip him any earlier, it was an oversight that would not please their boss.

"Oh?" she said flatly.

"Really embarrassing to have to do this on a date," Harry sighed. "I'm really sorry about this. Spent all day getting prettied up and I forgot to pick up some cash."

"Don't worry about it," she assured him, didn't look like he was trying to mooch off her after all. Now if she could only figure out where she'd seen his face before. "Happens to the best of us."

"This way," he took her arm and gently led her into a dark alley way.

"You probably don't want to take this shortcut," the League Magician whispered softly.

"Why not?" Harry asked.

"Because there's a toll," the lead thug decided to make the gang's presence known.

"Was wondering when you guys would show up," Harry said in relief.

Zatanna's pupils narrowed to pin pricks, a set up?

"Stupefy, stupefy, stupefy, stupefy, stupefy, stupefy, stupefy, stupefy, stupefy, stupefy, stupefy, stupefy, and stupefy," Harry chanted. Whistling a jaunty tune, Harry set about looting his opponents of everything useful. "There," he said in satisfaction at a job well done.

"You just . . ." the headliner stuttered.

"Got anyplace you'd recommend?" Harry asked hopefully. "I'm new in Vegas and haven't had time to see the sights."

"Uhh . . ."

"And I should probably phone this in," Harry continued. "It's the polite thing to do anyway."

"You know magic?" she blurted.

"So do you," Harry agreed. "Or I would have asked you to wait somewhere while I did this."

"What I do on stage is . . ." Harry raised an eyebrow causing her to trail off. "Fine, I know magic too," she sighed. "How'd you know?"

"I can feel it in you," Harry replied. It was in one of the handy guides he'd looted from the Ministry, they were great for those times he was on a bus and couldn't get to sleep. A couple chapters and he was out like a light.

"Well, why are you rolling back alley thugs for petty cash?" she demanded. "Why not get a job?"

"Not much I can do," Harry said with a shrug. "No marketable skills or identity papers."

"Magic."

"Half trained and I hate being the center of attention."

"Where'd you learn how to use your powers anyway?"

"Somewhere that I'll probably never see again," Harry sighed. "If you want to cut our date short, then . . ."

"No!" she blurted. Not after she found a guy that wasn't bothered by her powers that wasn't a super villain or a member of the league. "Uh, I know an Italian place not far from here. Why don't we try that?"

"Sure," Harry agreed.

|||||

Kara was waiting when Superman returned from his mission and the look on her face caused a chill to run through the hero's mighty spine.

"What is it?" he asked, fearing the worst.

"Ma wants to have a talk with you," Kara replied.

"Why?"

"She said that you had better be home within three minutes of getting back into the solar system," Kara squeaked. "She said she'd know if you were even a second late."

The man of steel bravely stepped out the airlock and flew down to earth as fast as his powers would take him.

|||||

Zatanna pouted as her date shot down another of her arguments. Twenty minutes into their date and she had a sinking feeling that she



wouldn't be able to find a reason to get her potential boyfriend to give up his life of crime. Her eyes lit up as another argument came to mind.

"Well you're still robbing those people," Zatanna stated. "The fact that they're criminals doesn't change things, two wrongs don't make a right."

"The fact that they're criminals does change things," Harry replied with a grin. "Law states that you can take anything from someone you catch committing a crime. Congress passed it to make life easier for the heroes."

"Hah, you said you weren't a hero."

"Nothing in the law says I have to be one," Harry finished smugly.

"How do you know that?" she challenged.

"It's in the pamphlet the government puts out for persons displaced from their native dimensions," Harry replied, holding up a battered pamphlet. "Along with a lot of other useful facts."

"The government puts out a pamphlet for people from other dimensions?" she asked dumbly.

"Yeah, and time travelers, aliens, etc. You can get them in the bus station."

"Looks like you win this round," she conceded.

"I didn't know we were having a contest," Harry murmured. "Besides, what does it matter if I roll a few punks in Vegas or if I knock out some spandex clad pervert in Metropolis? I . . ."

"Wait," she interrupted. "You knocked out a spandex clad pervert in Metropolis?" Why did that sound familiar?

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "Sicko wore his underwear on the outside and had this fruity red cape."

"You're the guy who got Superman arrested," Zatanna blurted out in shock, finally piecing together where she'd seen his face before.

"Did what to who now?"

"Got Superman arrested," Zatanna repeated.

"Guy in a clown suit?" Harry asked uncertainly.

"No, that's the Joker," she replied.

"Uh . . . guy with clocks all over his clothes?" he ventured.

It took a bit of time, but she eventually managed to provide a good enough description of the hero to stimulate Harry's memory.

"The spandex fetishist?" Harry frowned. "Why would anyone care about that weirdo?"

"He's a mighty hero," Zatanna said hotly.

"He wears his underwear on the outside," Harry countered.

"I . . ." Privately conceding that the boy had a point, she tried a different tactic. "Why did you knock him out and call the police?"

"Let's see, a weirdo in spandex wearing his underwear on the outside asks me, an innocent young boy, to go off alone with him. What would you do in my situation?" Harry asked sarcastically.

"What were you doing when he tried to apprehend you?" Zatanna asked weakly

"Walking down the street and trying to decide what I wanted to eat," Harry replied. The strangest things happened when he was looking for something to eat, it was almost as bad as when he was standing around minding his own business, but fortunately not nearly as bad as when he was doing something educational.

"Well . . . I guess I would have done the same thing as you did," Zatanna said in defeat. Who would have thought Superman could get into so much hot water just because he didn't bother to explain his actions to a stranger?

|||||

Martha glared at her boy, daring him to say something, anything to defend himself. Imagine it, picking on poor Harry like that.

"It wasn't like that," Clark tried to defend himself.

"What was it like, then?" Ma Kent demanded. "Tell me exactly why you were bothering poor Harry?"

"Batman put out a detain order," Clark said quickly, trying to calm his angry mother. "I was just trying to arrest him."

"Batman? Don't think I haven't read about what he's been up to in the newspapers." A sudden thought occurred. "Exactly how close are you two anyway?"

"What?"

"Is that why you haven't settled down and given me grandchildren?"

"No, I . . ."

"Why is it then?"

|||||

Harry was escorting Zatanna back to the hotel when a police car, lights flashing and siren blaring, screeched to a stop beside them.

"You're Harry, right?" the cop asked quickly.

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "What can I do for you?"

"We need your help," the cop replied. "Get in."

"Sorry I had to cut this short and sorry I couldn't walk you home," Harry said.

By way of reply, Zatanna grabbed him by the ears and gave him a soul searing kiss. "Don't worry about it."

Harry stumbled into the passenger seat and the police car tore off into the night.

"I forgot to give him a way to contact me," Zatanna gasped. "Damn it!"

|||||

The Joker reached up to scratch his cheek with one of his shiny new hooks when Harley screamed out for his attention.

"Mista J, come quick!" Harley hollered. "Ye gotta see this!"

"What is it, Harl?" the Joker asked as he sauntered into the room.

"D' TV."

The Joker glanced at the idiot box and immediately smiled when he saw his favorite 'hero' on the screen.

"We're coming to you live from the sunset strip where a madman has strapped explosives to his chest and is threatening to blow up a bus full of school children."

The camera panned to a man with wild red hair screaming at the top of his lungs and waving, what appeared to be a radio controlled detonator in his left hand.

"I want a helicopter, a million . . . make that fifty million dollars, and a pardon from the governor . . . make that the President, or the kids get it. I've loaded this bus with a hundred . . . make that five hundred pounds of explosives and if you try anything, there won't be enough of the little darlings to fill a shoe . . . make that match box."

The camera panned back to the police line and focused on a messy haired teen standing next to one of the police officers. The young man was holding up his right hand and repeating after the officer.

"...Swear to obey the laws of Los Vegas and the United states government, to respect the authority entrusted to me, and to help law enforcement officials when required."

The Camera man zoomed in, getting a close up of the officer's solemn face, and then panned to the equally sober Harry as the officer continued.

"Then It is my pleasure to deputize you into the Los Vegas Police department. Your first duty will be to help us resolve the current situation."

Harry's Answering grin was angelic and excited. The camera man, showing the professionalism that had landed him one of the sweetest gigs in the city zoomed back out just in time to catch Harry whip around and send a couple of quick cutting charms at the hostage taker.

"Problem solved," Harry said with a satisfied grin. "Need anything else?"

"Nope." The man looked over at the screaming criminal. "Did you have to chop off his arms?"

"I did if I wanted to be sure the kids would be okay," Harry agreed. "Would have tried something else if it was just him, wasn't going to risk it when the safety of the kids was at stake."

"Works for me," the cop agreed. "Good job, kid."

"Always happy to help," Harry said modestly.

The camera panned back to the reporter.

"Once again, the day is saved, thanks to the actions of a plucky young man with powers and without a mask." The reporter gave a fake smile, ignoring the screams of the disarmed criminal in the background. "For channel six news, I'm Mike Michaels, signing off."

The Joker's laughter filled the hideout. "And that's why I love that kid," he said loudly. "Class and a sense of humor, where else do you find those two things together?"

Harley's eyes narrowed in jealousy, it seemed she had a rival.

|||||||

It was late morning when Harry got back to his hotel, just in time to check out.

"Compliments of Ms. Zatanna, sir," the desk clerk said, handing him a note. "She asks that you please contact her the next time you're in town."

"Thanks," Harry said with a grin. "I will, definitely come back here to stay too. This place is amazing."

"I'm glad you think so, sir, and I'm doubly glad to tell you that you've got a life time twenty percent discount in all Lex hotels."

"I don't know what to say." Harry's grin deepened. "Thanks, I . . . just thanks."

"We're happy to be of service, sir. Do you need a ride to the bus station?"

"Sure," Harry agreed. "You guys take care of everything."

|||||||

Martha stopped at the bus station and gave a heartfelt sigh. This was where she'd dropped poor Harry off just a couple short weeks before. She hoped the boy was taking care of himself.

"Something wrong?" a familiar voice asked.

"Harry!" Martha squealed. "You're back."

"I thought I'd visit since I was passing back through Kansas," Harry explained.

"You're just in time for lunch," she said happily. "Come back to the farm with me."

"I could never turn down one of your meals, Mrs. Kent," Harry agreed. He spent the ride back telling her of the things he'd seen since his last visit.

"Kara!" Martha yelled as they pulled in.

"Yeah, mom?" a slim, top heavy, blonde replied.

"I'd like you to meet Harry. Harry, my daughter, Kara."

"Hi." The girl was unable to resist giving him a curious once over.

"Hi yourself," Harry replied trying not to stare. She was a very 'healthy' young girl.

Martha watched happily at the teens' reactions as they walked back into the house.

"Kara, could you give us a bit of privacy?" Martha asked.

"Okay, mom," the girl agreed, walking out of the room.

"I hate to ask this," Martha began, trying to think of a way to phrase her request.

"Anything," Harry replied.

"It's just . . . do you think you could enchant some rope to be unbreakable and . . . and maybe a riding crop?" she asked slowly.

"Shouldn't be too much trouble," Harry agreed. "Why do you need it?"

"It's a present for my son's girlfriend," Martha replied with a blush. She would have her grand babies no matter what it took.

"She's really into horse riding, huh?" Harry scratched his chin. "Give me a couple weeks to make sure I can make the spells last, nothing worse than getting bucked off because the magic wore off and the rope snapped."

"Thank you, Harry," she said, relieved the conversation was over. Martha raised her voice. "You can come back now, Kara."

The door opened to admit the blushing girl who was doing a fair imitation of her native red sun.

"You do remember that I have super hearing?" the red faced girl whispered to her adopted mother, trying very hard not to imagine a scene with Harry getting bucked off that his words had conjured.

"I'm sure you can keep a secret, dear," Martha replied.

"We saw you on the news," Kara announced. "Did you really have to cut that guy's arms off?"

"Nope, but that would have increased the chances of the kids getting hurt." Harry shrugged. "Would have stunned him but I didn't know if that would make the bomb go off." Harry paused. "I'd have also cut his head off or done anything else to him if that's what it took to save those kids, glad I didn't have to." In the end, Harry's greatest power was his willingness to do things that well adjusted people would never consider.

"So . . . um . . ." Kara blushed a deep red. "Have you seen the town diner? They have the best milkshakes around. If you want . . . um . . . I guess I could show you," she finished hopefully.

"Sure," Harry agreed. "I'd love to go."



"If you do that, poor Harry will miss his bus," Martha pointed out, noting the look of disappointment on her daughter's face. "So I'm going to have to insist that you stay in the spare room tonight, Harry."

"If you insist," Harry agreed.

"Why don't you two have lunch in town?" Martha suggested. "You can come back in a few hours for dinner."

"Okay, mom," Kara agreed. "Come on, Harry. I know a short cut through the fields, it's almost as fast as driving."

"Why don't you show him the pond on the way back," Martha suggested after them. It was where she and her husband used to go to have a bit of personal time before they'd gotten married. It was only proper that the next generation carried on the tradition.

Martha was still smiling when her husband came home.

"What's got you so cheerful?" Jonathan asked.

"Harry came back," she replied.

"Oh, where is he?"

"Kara's showing him the pond," Martha replied.

"She is, is she?" He turned and began walking out of the house.

"Stop right there! Kara's perfectly able to take care of herself."

"You say Harry is a nice boy, right?"

"That's right," Martha agreed.

"Isn't that what your mother used to say about me?" Jonathan countered. "Don't you remember what we used to do when we went for a walk by the pond?"

"I'm sure I don't know what you could be referring to," Martha replied, blushing a deep red.

"We're home," Kara announced.

"So soon?"

"I um . . ." Kara looked down at her feet that were floating about six inches off the ground. "I'm having trouble coming down."

"Wish we could all have that problem. It'd be great to be able to fly on your own," Harry said wistfully, apparently neither surprised nor shocked that Kara was floating.

"Come with me, Kara," Martha ordered. "Before I forget. Harry, I'd like you to meet my husband, Jonathan Kent."

"Nice to meet you, Mr. Kent."

"Nice to meet you, Harry," Jonathan replied.

"Please keep each other entertained till we get back," Martha asked as she hustled her daughter out of the room.

She closed the door and pulled the girl into a hug.

"What happened?" Martha asked gently.

"I kissed him and I got so excited that I started floating," Kara admitted.

"And you're having a hard time calming down?"

"Every time I start to, I think about what happened and go up again."

"A lot of girls feel like they're floating on cloud nine when they get a kiss," Martha assured her daughter. "It's perfectly normal."

|||||||

Jonathan and Harry stared at one another for a few minutes until Jonathan decided to break the silence. "I hear you're traveling the country."

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "I spent . . . I didn't get to see much growing up and I figured I owed myself to see some of the world since I didn't get killed."

"There's a story there," Jonathan observed.

"I did something stupid to save my godfather and my friends," Harry admitted. "Woke up in this world."

"Where'd you expect to wake up?"

"I didn't. What happened should have killed me and considering the way things have been going for me I'm not completely sure it hasn't. This world just keeps getting better an better."

"I see."

They lapsed into silence for a few minutes. This time it was Harry that chose to break it.

"Anything you need help with around the farm?" Harry asked. "Doesn't feel right staying here without doing something to earn my keep."

"Been meaning to clean out the old barn," Jonathan said after a moment of thought, not wanting to hurt the boy's pride by turning him down. "Suppose you could help me with that before dinner."

"Let's go," Harry agreed.

IIIIIIII

Martha gave her daughter one last hug.

"Feeling better?"

"Uh huh," Kara agreed.

"Good. You've got nothing to worry about, you saw how Harry reacted. He's not going to stop talking to you because you can do things he can't. He can do things you can't. That's also normal."

"Okay," Kara agreed.

|||||

Jonathan watched in shock as the barn cleaned and repaired itself after a flick of the boy's wand.

"What do you want me to do with all this stuff?" Harry asked, waving to a pile of old tack.

"I'll go through it later and toss out everything that can't be repaired," Jonathan replied.

"Would you rather I fixed it all?" Harry asked.

"You can do that?" He slapped himself. "Of course you can do that, you did it to the barn."

"Just give me a few minutes to research it," Harry asked looking for a particularly ratty piece to experiment with. "Never did leather before."

"Take your time."

|||||

Batman moaned through his ball gag as his tormentor brought her riding crop down on his bare behind again and again and . . . wait, why'd she stop? He looked back and his eyes nearly bulged out of their sockets.

"Sorry ta botha ya Wonder Woman," Harlequin said as she walked into the room. "But I really need to talks with ol'Bats."

"How did you know where to find him?" Diana demanded.

"Mista J has known about Bats' secret identity for a long time now," the psychotic henchgirl replied.

"Oh." Diana pulled out the ball gag. "Ten more for the interruption."

"Yes, princess." He turned his best menacing glare on the criminal, something made much more difficult by the fact that he was chained to a saw horse. "What do you want?" he growled.

"I think I'm loosin Puddin," the clown girl sobbed.

IIIIIIIIII

Bullock looked up in annoyance when one of the other police officers walked up to his desk and loudly cleared her throat.

"What is it?" the detective growled.

"Got a charity here that wants to hand out condoms to some of the rent boys we picked up," she replied. "We told her that she had to talk to you first."

"Why in the hell did you do that?" he barked.

"Trust me, this is one meeting you really want to have," she said with a wide grin. "You'll hate yourself forever if you miss it."

"Send her over," the Detective ordered.

The officer left only to return with a leggy blonde in tow. "Here's Detective Bullock, the man you have to talk to."

"Thank you," the leggy blonde replied. "Detective, my name is Marsha Brady and I'm here on behalf of the Clean Gotham initiative."

"Get to the point," he ordered.

"You're aware of the high rates of venereal disease found among Gotham's male sex workers, are you not, Detective?" she asked.

"Show Detective Bullock the condoms you'd like to give to the prisoners," the uniformed officer prompted with a grin.

"Yes, of course. Here you are, Detective," Marsha said, handing him a pack of condoms.

"Why do these have bat symbols on them?" he demanded with a confused frown.

"You're not aware of the latest slang, Detective?" Marsha asked in surprise.

"Detective Bullock doesn't work vice," the officer explained. "But perhaps he'd like to go along while you pass a few out." She bit her tongue to keep from laughing. "Trust me, Detective."

"Let's get this over with," Bullock sighed.

|||||||

It took Bruce almost an hour to calm the insane clown girl enough to get the whole story. 'Harry!' he thought, his mind filling with rage.

"Tell me everything!" he barked.

|||||||

Harvey's jaw dropped when he saw the cells filled with men in batman costumes. He'd have never . . . an evil thought occurred.

"You can pass them out to the prisoners, so long as you agree ta do one thing for me," he told the leggy blonde, with an evil grin.

"What is that one thing, Detective Bullock?" she asked in a frosty tone, afraid he was going to ask to test one of the condoms with him.

"I want to make sure everyone in Gotham has a chance to protect themselves," Bullock said. It only took a few minutes to explain what he wanted her to do.

"That shouldn't be a problem, Detective," Marsha said with a bright smile. "And let me say what a pleasure it is to work with such a dedicated public servant."

|||||

Harry had just finished refurbishing the old horse tack when Kara reappeared.

"Um . . . hey," the girl said, glancing down at her feet. "Guess you want to know why I can fly, huh?"

"If you want to tell me," Harry agreed. "If not, I don't need to know. For that matter, I'd assume you'd like to know about my magic powers."

"Yeah," she agreed.

"Have a seat." He waved her to one of the hay bales. "It all started one day when a letter appeared . . ."

|||||

"The Bat Signal just went off, worm," Wonder Woman announced. "Get back before ten or you're staying in the kennel tonight."

"Yes, Princess!" Bruce yelped.

"Leave, now!" She kept her firm expression until her boyfriend left the room. It softened considerably when she turned back to the villainess. "Alfred is bringing up some ice cream and the two of us are going to have a long conversation about men."

"Thanks, Wonder Woman," Harlequin sniffed. "You're the best."

|||||

Jonathan and Martha jumped up from the table and raced towards the barn after the wind carried the sound of their daughter sobbing.

"If he's hurt her," Jonathan growled as he tore open the door. His tirade abruptly ended when he took in the scene. Kara had her arms wrapped around the blue boy, her face buried in his shoulder crying her eyes out.

"You're going to have to loosen your grip so he can breathe, Kara," Martha said gently.

"Ma!" Kara released the gasping boy and grabbed onto her adopted mother.

"Come with me, dear," Martha said, hustling her daughter towards the house. "And tell me all about it."

"What happened?" Jonathan demanded.

"I don't know," Harry replied, still panting for breath. "I was telling her about how I found out I was a wizard and she just started crying."

"Oh." That put a whole new spin on things. "Women do that sometimes. Martha will come by later and explain things. I wouldn't worry about it too much until then."

"Alright."

"Did you get a chance to look at the saddles?"

"I did," Harry agreed. "Put them back up on the pegs too."

IIIIIIIIII

Batman landed on the roof and walked up to the Bat Signal.

"You called for me, Commissioner?" he asked in a gravelly voice.

"No," a woman replied. "I did." She thrust a package of bat condoms into his hands. "Are you aware of how risky your behavior is?"

IIIIIIIIII



Harry was sitting at the table, eating with his left hand since the girl on his right had captured his other hand and refused to let it go.

"Have another helping, Harry," Martha suggested, spooning another serving on mashed potatoes on his plate.

"That's the third one," Harry laughed. "I'm not sure I can finish it."

"You need to make up for missed meals," Martha sniffed, wiping a tear from the corner of her eye. Such a brave boy for enduring what he had.

IIIIIIII

Detective Bullock was bouncing up and down in excitement as the paddy wagon pulled in.

"What's got you so up?" one of the other cops demanded.

"Vice is bringing in a new load of streetwalkers," the large Detective replied. "Shhh. Just watch."

The back doors of the van opened and out came a man in an odd batman costume, followed by another, and another, and another, until it became clear that there was nothing in the van but a bunch of costumed crime fighters.

"I find out who convinced the rent boys to dress like that, they get a round of drinks on me," Bullock laughed. "I haven't felt so good since my third marriage."

"Wasn't she the one that tried to kill you?"

"Yeah, almost succeeded too," Bullock agreed.

"Guy you want goes by the name of Harry. Caught a bunch of thugs torturing batman in a dark warehouse and misinterpreted the situation," one of the other detectives said helpfully. "Intelligence has a whole file on the incident."

|||||

Harry woke up to a bone crushing hug from Kara coupled with a tearful goodbye.

"But I'll be back in a couple hours so don't go anywhere," the girl begged.

"I'll see what I can do," Harry agreed. With his biggest local source of distraction gone, Harry set about researching the best way to complete the commission Martha had given him.

|||||

Mrs. Kent made a big pitcher of lemonade and carried it out to the barn. It was hot outside and she worried that her house guest wasn't drinking enough water to deal with it.

"Good timing," Harry said, wiping a bit of sweat off his brow.

"Oh?"

"Turns out there were already a set of spells for it in one of my books for some reason so I didn't have to develop them myself," Harry explained. "Also turns out that I had a couple female riding outfits in my things. Should be charmed to fit, self repair, and to protect the rider from damage."

"Thank you, Harry."

"I'm always happy to help a friend," Harry replied.

"Speaking of help . . ."

"Yes?"

"Kara won't be back till later today and she'll be devastated if you leave without saying goodbye, so . . ."

Yes?" Harry prompted.

"Do you think you could stay another night?"

"Sure," Harry agreed. "I already agreed to see her again before I left and it's not like I'm in a hurry to get anywhere."

"And . . . um . . . I hate to ask for another favor after all the help you've already given me," Martha dithered.

"What is it?" Harry prompted.

"Would it be possible to include a mask with that riding outfit?" Martha asked hopefully.

"Give me thirty seconds." Harry rummaged around the bag for a moment. "It okay if I make it out of black silk?" he held up a bolt of material.

"That would be perfect, Harry."

Harry cast a dozen quick spells to shape the fabric and another several to enchant it.

"Here you are, all the standard spells plus another that should make the user difficult to recognize. Tell me if you need anything else or if the enchantments start to unravel and I'll do my best to fix, make, or modify whatever you need."

"Thank you, Harry, you've been a big help."

IIIIIIIIII

Martha was waiting when her daughter and husband returned later that day.

"Is Harry still here?" Kara demanded.

"He is," she agreed. "And I would appreciate it if you kept him out of the house for a couple hours."

"Happy to help with that, ma," Kara giggled, darting off to meet with the boy.

"You've got a few thing in the barn you need to take care of, don't you, Jonathan?" Martha prompted.

"Just tell me when you're through with whatever it is," the man agreed.

"Thank you."

IIIIIIII

Bruce strained against his bonds. Though blindfolded, his keen sense of hearing could hear her footsteps getting closer, ever closer until . . .

"Phone call for you, Mistress Diana," Alfred's voice broke Bruce out of his trance.

"Thank you, Alfred," she replied. Her voice hardened, "the worm is not to move until I get back."

"Of course not," Alfred agreed. "What should I do in the event of the Bat Signal being used?"

"Release him and have one clothes pin ready for every ten minutes that he's gone," Diana ordered.

"I shall see to it, Mistress Diana," Alfred agreed.

"Thank you, Alfred. I don't know how we'd manage without you." She took the phone and listened for a few minutes. "Change of plans, Alfred. Let him out after five hours for five minutes, then it's off to the hole until I return."

"Yes, Mistress Diana," Alfred agreed. It was so nice to have a lady in the house again.

The flight from Gotham to Kansas didn't take long and Diana was soon walking to the front door of Superman's childhood home.

"Diana," Martha said, swinging open the door before the other woman had a chance to knock. "Thank you for coming."

"You said you had a problem you needed my help with?" Diana asked.

"It's about Clark," Martha sighed. "I didn't know who else to turn to, then Alfred told me what you've done for Bruce and . . ."

"I'm not going to do for Clark what I do for Bruce," Diana interjected firmly.

"Of course not," Martha gasped, scandalized by the very notion. "I just wanted you to give Lois a little talk, maybe give her some pointers. It really isn't the best thing to come from me."

"I see."

"I also have some gifts I'd like you to pass along," Martha continued, indicating a large box. "I thought it better to come from one of the girls rather than her boyfriend's mother."

"What sort of gifts?" Diana asked.

"The sort his father and I used to enjoy when we were younger," Martha replied with a deep blush.

|||||

Harry and a floating Kara returned to the house just a few minutes after Diana had made her exit.

"Have another good walk by the pond?" Martha asked.

"The best," Kara agreed.

"Good." Martha winked at her daughter. "Are you planning to head back to the east coast any time soon, Harry?"

"Maybe, why?" Harry asked.

"Would you mind calling me the next time you're in Gotham, Harry?" Martha requested. "I have a friend that was hoping that you'd be willing to enchant some things for her too."

"No problem," Harry agreed. "Tell her I charge in food, though I'm not sure I should since the food here is so good that I think I still owe you a few hundred enchanted items."

"Who's your friend, Ma?" Kara hissed, eyes narrowing in jealousy.

"Diana," Martha replied.

"Oh." Kara relaxed. "That's okay then." For a second she was afraid that she was going to get some competition.

|||||||

Clark had just returned home after a hard day of writing articles, rescuing Lois from mortal peril, and saving the city, when two animated ropes snaked under his door and tied him up.

The door opened and the man of steel strained to see who his latest captor was. It was a woman dressed in a traditional English riding outfit complete with helmet and jodhpurs with one addition, a domino mask obscuring her features and making identification impossible, even to his Kryptonian senses.

"Well well well, look what I caught in my little trap," the woman purred.

"Who are you?" Clark demanded. "What do you want?"

"Oh, sorry." The woman's posture shifted from confident to embarrassed and she took off her mask to reveal the smiling face of the Daily Planet's ace reporter.

"Lois, what are you doing?" Clark asked, straining against the ropes holding him down.

"You will speak only when spoken to!" Lois barked. A girlish grin appeared on her face. "Diana told me what you wanted for your birthday, just play along."

"Wha?"

"Silence," she ordered, punctuating her command by striking him with her riding crop, causing a sharp pain to shoot through the man's shoulder.

"Oww!" he winced.

"I'm sorry," Lois said contritely. "Did that hurt you?"

"A bit," he admitted. "Not so hard next time."

"Okay," she chirped. A cruel grin appeared on the woman's face as she redid her mask. "You will follow my instructions, do you understand?"

"No?" He shot his girlfriend an odd look, what in the hell was going on.

"You've been wild and untamed too long," she said. A wicked grin appeared on her face and she brought her riding crop down on his buttocks with a resounding whack. "You may not understand now, but you'll learn your place soon enough," she promised.

She waved her hand like Diana had taught her and the saddle jumped up and placed itself on the hero's back. Another wave and the bridle joined its companion.

"I think a nice loop around the city to start off with," she mused as she mounted. A third wave undid the roped.

"Lowis, whas . . ." he tried to ask, voice muffled by the bit in his mouth.

"Silence," she ordered, whacking him on the butt. "You have your instructions, a loop around the city."

Seeing no other options available, he complied, his grin so wide it threatened to split his face.

|||||

Bob had saved up for months for his trip to Metropolis and it was all with the aim of getting a glimpse of his hero, the city's greatest defender.

"Look, what's that in the sky?" he asked excitedly.

"It's a bird," one of the others in his tour group said disinterestedly.

"No, I think it's a plane," one of the others disagreed.

"Looks like a frog to me," an old lady opinionated.

"It's not a frog, grandma," a little girl giggled. "It's Superman, and there's a lady on top of him bouncing around." In a flash, the old lady's hand was covering her granddaughter's eyes.

"That never would have happened in my day," the old lady said firmly.

Bob wasn't paying attention, every fiber of his being was concentrating on getting the perfect shot. He'd later credit his new telephoto lens for allowing him to take the iconic shot that would grace the front page of every newspaper in the country and would later become the centerpiece of a brand new LexIndustries ad campaign. But deep down, he'd always know that the real credit went to lady luck. Without her, he'd have never been in the right place to take the shot, never scheduled his tour at the right time to get the shot, never arrived at the store for the sale that allowed him to afford the lens in the first place. Life was pretty good for Bob and it was only getting better.

|||||

Lois was still giggling when Superman landed on her balcony and stood still to allow her to dismount.



"That was really fun," Lois bubbled. "We'll have to do it again soon." She pulled Superman into a toe curling kiss. "I rode you first so it's only fair for you to ride me now."

"Well . . . it is only fair," the hero agreed with a super lecherous grin.

|||||

Harry was walking down the highway enjoying the sight of the sun rise when a ratty looking ex-police car pulled to a stop next to him.

"Need a ride?" the man in the left seat asked. He was dressed in a black suit, black tie, black sunglasses, black shoes, and a black hat.

"Sure," Harry agreed.

"Hop in," the identically dressed man in the right seat suggested.

|||||

Clark carefully extracted himself from his lover's embrace and flew out the window. He needed to talk with someone about what had happened the night before.

It didn't take long to fly to Gotham and through the secret entrance to the Wayne Manor.

"Something I can do for you, sir?" Alfred greeted the hero.

"I need to talk to Bruce about something," Clark replied with a blush.

"Of course, sir," Alfred agreed. "Is there anything else?"

"May I use your phone?" Clark asked. "I need to call the Planet to let them know that I'm going in late today."

"Feel free, sir. You know where it is, I trust?" Alfred asked.

"I do," Clark agreed.

"Master Bruce shall be down shortly," Alfred said as he walked out of the room.

|||||

Bruce froze as his earpiece chirped twice before relaying Alfred's message.

"I see," Bruce sighed. "Banana."

"What's wrong?" Diana asked, helping him free himself from his ropes.

"Alfred just contacted me through my earpiece, Clark's here and he needs someone to talk to."

"Oh . . . you didn't, I wasn't too rough was I?" she asked with worry filled eyes.

"You were just right," he assured her, punctuating his statement with a quick kiss. "I just need to speak with Clark and we can get back to our fun and games."

"Do you think it could be my turn to be tied up next?" Diana asked hopefully.

He grabbed a fist full of her hair and pulled her into another kiss. "You have been a very naughty Amazon," he whispered.

|||||

Harry awoke with a jolt when the car pulled to a stop at the end of a large traffic jam. The driver was already leaning out the window to find out what was wrong.

"What's the hold up?" the driver asked.

"Nazis are doing their annual march across the bridge," one of the pedestrians replied.

"Illinois Nazis," the driver said in disgust.

"I hate Illinois Nazis," the passenger growled.

"Floor it," Harry suggested. To the boy's intense disappointment, the racists all managed to jump off the bridge before being flattened by the moving chunk of Detroit steel to the cheers of the crowd. "Let me out here," Harry asked. "I want to go back and finish the job."

"Have fun, kid."

"See you around," the passenger agreed.

"I'll kill you!" the short Nazi leader screamed from the river. "You're dead, your families are dead, your pets are dead!"

"Let's see," Harry mumbled to himself as he gathered up his power. "What can I do to these guys that will set an example for all the other Death Eaters wannabees in the world?" He smiled. "How about . . ." a twitch of his wand caused the section of the river containing the swimming bastards to raise up into the sky. "Now to close things." the section became a sphere. "And now to make the blades." A few sections of the water hardened into ice. His blender was ready, all he had to do was set it to puree.

A giant green hand appeared and rescued Harry's soon to be victims.

"Some reason you did that, mate?" Harry asked calmly, too calmly.

"Because it's my job," the Green Lantern replied. The man's eyes bulged when he recognized the boy he was facing. On a scale of good to not good, this situation had a rating of totally fucked.

"Take a walk for a few minutes," Harry advised.

"Look, we all hate Illinois Nazis, but you can't just kill them," the Green Lantern said earnestly, a trickle of nervous sweat working its way down his brow.

"You're protecting them?" Harry growled. The air around the boy began to shimmer. Violence appeared to be imminent.

"I swore an oath to protect everyone," the Green Lantern replied. "No matter who they were or what I thought of them."

Harry gave the nervous man a flat stare for a few moments before giving a slow nod. "You know what? I can respect that. What are you going to do with them?"

"Haul them off to jail," the Green Lantern replied. Figuring that it was the safest answer to give. "I'd do the same with you, but I doubt there's a jury in the country that would convict you." And it would be embarrassing to have the judge, jury, and attorneys, and bailiffs carry the boy out of the courthouse on their shoulders.

"They're all yours," Harry said. The boy turned around and walked away. "Be sure to tell them how lucky they were."

"I will," the Green Lantern agreed, sagging with relief. "I'll also point out that I won't always be around to protect them."

IIIIIIIIII

Bruce's grin got wider and wider as he listened to his best friend's rant about the events of the night before.

"To sum things up?" he prompted.

"To sum things up, this is all your fault," Clark growled at his best friend.

"How is it my fault?" Bruce asked.

"If you and Diana hadn't decided to be so public, none of this would have happened," Clark barked.

"You think that was my idea?" Bruce asked incredulously. "The Princess insisted we do it."

"The Princess?"

"She knows if I call her anything else," Bruce replied nervously, eyes darting around the room as if he was afraid his mistress would suddenly burst in. He grinned. "More seriously, did you enjoy yourself?"

"I . . ." Clark blushed a deep red.

"That's all that matters," Bruce cut the other man off. "So long as what you're doing is making you happy or it's something you're willing to do to make her happy." He put his arm around the other man's shoulders. "There are a few things you need to know to make sure that everyone enjoys themselves. First is to agree to stop everything the moment your partner says either 'no' or gives a safe word. It also helps us to have someone outside the situation monitoring it to make sure we don't take things too far, Alfred's been a big help with that. Another thing you need to know is . . ."

IIIIIIII

Vixen gave a depressed sigh as she stared out across the water. Her romantic situation sucked and was bound to end in tears no matter what happened. If she got the guy, it meant a friend didn't. If her friend got the guy, it meant she didn't. And if things continued as they had, they'd all be miserable.

"What's got you so down?" a male voice asked.

She gave a start at the unexpected break in silence and looked up to see the person some people called the most dangerous man in America, the boy who'd effortlessly defeated two of the League's most powerful heroes, looking down at her.

"I . . . I . . ." she stammered.

"Yes?"

"What the hell," she laughed. He didn't look like he wanted to fight.  
"Have a seat, Harry."

"How'd you know my name, uh . . ."

"Mari," she introduced herself. "And I know it because you're quite famous in some circles."

"Saw me on the tele?"

"Something like that," she agreed.

"So what's the problem?"

"I have a friend and she and I are fighting over who gets to have-"  
She blushed. "Something."

"Why can't you and your friend just share it?" Harry asked.

"It's . . ." she licked her lips. "Not unheard of to share where I'm from.  
I'm not sure she'd go for it though."

"She will if she's your friend and she wants the thing as much as you seem to think she does," Harry said firmly. "I know I'd be willing to share anything I had to keep a friend happy."

"Maybe."

"Just try talking with her about it," Harry suggested. He glanced at his watch. "If you'll excuse me, I've got a bus to catch. Good luck."

"I will, and thanks, Harry."

IIIIIIIIII

Clark walked into the Planet and was immediately confronted by his angry editor.

"Kent!" Perry bellowed. "My office!"

"You called for me, Chief?" Clark asked.

"Do you have any idea why Lois just called in sick saying that she was unable to work today?" Perry demanded.

"Um . . ." Clark blushed a deep scarlet red.

"She mentioned something about being unable to walk or move anything from the waist down," Perry continued. "Sounded more than a bit smug about that little tidbit."

"Um, Chief I . . ."

"Now it's none of my business what you two do in your off time, but try to go easier on her next time, I can't afford to lose days of work from one of my star reporters," Perry finished. "Got it?"

"Got it, Chief," Clark agreed.

"Good." A grin split the other man's face. "Cigar?"

IIIIIIIIII

Vixen mustered up her courage as she walked through the halls of the Watchtower in search of her friend. She finally had a solution to her romantic mess that would make everyone happy, deliriously happy in the case of one green clad hero, and all she had to do was be brave enough to go through with it.

"Hawkgirl!" she called out, spotting her prey.

"Vixen?"

"I need to have a talk with you about something," Vixen said seriously. "It's important."

"Let's go find someplace private," Hawkgirl suggested.

AN: Main concept when dealing with the capes is that each one has a fetish, getting back to their roots with this. Don't believe me? Look up

Wonder Woman's origin story, look at who created her and why.  
Interesting guy, very interesting guy.

Lots of editing by dogbertcarroll

Polish by: dogbertcarroll,

More polish by rhianona

Scenes by Manatheron

Typos by: katling2003, Tommy King, kahless62003, yamaban,  
Jeremy Silver, Lucinda Siverling, Ordieth, Simon Mountney, akas2k1,  
Red Jacobson, Jim Compton

Ideas by: daenerys5539,

Deleted Scenes:

"It's all thanks to Harry," Vixen sighed as she settled into the arms of her lovers.

"Harry?" the Green Lantern squeaked, stiffening at the name. Oh god he knew it was too good to be true.

"Yeah," Vixen agreed. "He's the one that suggested sharing."

|||||||

"And that's why I'm not ever going to get on his bad side and why I'm going to do everything possible to get on his good side," the Flash said firmly.

|||||||

The Flash walked into the conference room and collapsed into his chair. "Fire in an office building, too high for the ladders to reach."

"Any reason you didn't call for help?"



"I was going to, but Harry was already there and . . ." the Flash trailed off, not wanting to bring the subject up around Batman.

"You accepted his assistance?" Batman growled.

"He's actually a really nice guy once you get to know him. He's got this spell that made the flames cold and stopped them from doing any damage and another one that made a bubble of air around my head so the smoke wouldn't bother me, the mayor gave him the keys to the city," the Flash said quickly.

"How could you . . ." Batman began.

"You know what your name is slang for these days?" The Flash cut him off.

"I . . ."

"Submissive male interested in homosexual bondage," Hawkgirl answered automatically causing several in the league to shoot her a wary look.

"What?" Batman's voice was flat. One of the other heroes handed him the personals section from the Daily Planet with one ad circled with black ink. "SWBBM looking for multiple partners."

"Single white bisexual Batman," Hawkgirl translated the acronym.

"Like I said before," the Flash began. "There is no way in hell I'm getting on his bad side. Especially not after seeing such a graphic example of what he does to his enemies."

IIIIIIII

Harry's in Gotham again and decides to stop at a certain ex-con's club:

"Sweet hooks," Harry complimented the insane clown. "Sorry about the whole chopping off your hands thing, by the way. But I wouldn't have been able to make the 'unhanded him' joke if I hadn't done it."

"Which as good a reason to do it as any," the Joker agreed. "Aren't you going to ask me how I got the eyepatch?"

"How'd you get the eyepatch?" Harry played along.

"I looked up, and a seagull pooped in my eye," the Joker said.

"What's that have to do with the eyepatch?" Harry set the joke up.

"Well, you have to understand. It was the first day I had the hooks," the Joker replied.

Harry lost it and the room filled with a deep bellowing laughter. "That's too much."

|||||

"Ever had a really bad day?" Harry asked. "The kind of day that sets the tone for the rest of your life?"

The assorted villains all nodded in agreement, they'd each had exactly that sort of day.

"Then you understand. Everyone has their mental kinks, I don't like it when people threaten kids." It tended to make him a bit homicidal.

"So you don't care if we threaten adults?"

"Depends on the adults," Harry replied.

"That why you travel the country beating and robbing street gangs?"

"With the occasional murder thrown in," the Joker added.

"Nah, I do that so I can pay for food and a roof over my head. It's called living off the land, what I do is no different from what our ancestors did on the veldt."

Omake by me

The Flash walked into the conference room looking like he'd been sexually assaulted by a ghost. Pale, shivering, and terrified that it might happen again.

"What happened to you?"

"Harry?"

"What'd he do to you?"

"Nothing."

"Damn it, what's wrong?"

"Do anything you have to, to keep that smile on his face," Flash replied. Reaching for a cup of coffee with a trembling hand. "Anything."

"Why?"

"He gets scary when he's angry," the fastest man alive said. "Very scary and very dangerous."

"So . . ."

"Just don't make him angry," the Flash said firmly. "You wouldn't like him when he's angry."

Omake by Stick97

Mrs. Kent sat drinking her tea, trying to calm down. After her last discussion with her wayward son, she had been prepared to unlock the liquor cabinet.

It seemed the lack of a positive male role model had a more negative effect than she thought on poor Clark. He had always been a little...rambunctious.

But it seemed like that older Luthor boy had been a much worse influence than she thought. She had been concerned Clark would be overly swayed by the flashy clothes, fancy cars, and oodles of money. Luckily, it seemed like the two had split apart before too much damage was done.

Or at least, so she thought.

She should have suspected something when he wore the costume she made for him inside out.

Unfortunately, Martha had been overcome with nostalgia, remembering how Clark had been simply horrible at dressing himself as a toddler.

She had assumed he merely got in a rush in all the excitement, and gotten a little mixed up.

The public had loved it, and it became quickly accepted.

Martha had been shamefully elated hearing all the old hens at the hairdresser talking about how good her little boy's tush looked in the costume. She expected a flock o grandbabies within a year or two at most.

She had been initially appalled at the idea of her son having more than one wife, but it seemed the more powerful a Kryptonian man, the more women would be drawn to him. The Kryptonian culture encouraged this, and if the disaster hadn't occurred on Clark's homeworld, he would have had an army of siblings.

The memory crystal her husband had shown her was offensive at first, until he pointed out he was an Earthling and quite content with his very fine wife.

Then George had said the magic word.

Grandbabies!

She remembered noticing how Clark was always hanging out with those three girls in high school, and she had been elated.

Of course, all of her knitting had gone for naught. Lana had married Pete, Chloe had gotten married a year or so later. Her last hope had been Lois, and frankly, that girl seemed all too interested in Diana.

Now there was a woman who would have given her some fine grandbabies. The fact she could fly, and move at superspeed were a definite plus as well.

Most parents referred to their children as destructive little tornadoes.

With Clark, it was an understatement!

She had been deathly afraid Child Services would take Clark away from them after the barn incident.

Explaining how a two year old got up on the roof of the barn to the Smallville Fire Department proved Clark wasn't the only one in the family who could spin a yarn.

Martha dejectedly sighed once more over her tea.

It had been so thoughtful of Harry to send her some "proper British tea and biscuits". She has to admit, it didn't keep her up all night, and was quite soothing.

Such a shame the boy had such a difficult life. She knew just how hard being an orphan could be on a young man.

Martha took another sip of her tea, while eating one of the delightful biscuits.

Harry was such a delightful young man, well mannered, resourceful, caring, and considerate. Kara would do well to have a young man like that around instead of all those reprobates Clark worked with nosing about her.

She had warned Kara that her scandalously short skirt would lead the wrong type of men to be interested in her.

When Kara replied, "At least my underwear is under the costume!", she had been effectively shut down.

Just then, she heard the thump on the back porch, and crash of the screen door as Kara got home from work.

Such a slip of a girl, yet she sounded like a herd of elephants when she came in!

Kara came in, and sat down with a huff.

"What's wrong dear?" asked Martha.

"Oh, I just had to spend all night listening to Zatanna talk about the 'hunky young man she met with gorgeous green eyes, and such a sexy smile!' while I was on monitor duty!" grumped Kara as she made air quotes with her hands in frustration.

Kara growled out in frustration, crossing her arms, and slouching petulantly down in her chair.

"Stop slouching dear, it's bad for your posture. Here try some tea, and one of these biscuits." soothed Martha, as she poured Kara a cup of hot tea.

Martha marveled at the fact that the charm Harry had put on her tea set kept everything at the perfect temperature, even after sitting all this time. Clark had ruined more than one set, trying to use his heat vision, and freezing breath to control the temperature for her.

"Ohhmmmygawff! ese arr 'mazing!" moaned Kara, spraying crumbs all over the table.

"Kara Zor-E! You close your mouth, and chew like a young lady!" admonished Martha. 'Able to stop a speeding bullet, but can't learn manners to save her life!' thought Martha, shaking her head.

"Thorry Ma!" said a blushing Kara. "But these are sooooo good! I just don't get why you called these yummy cookies, biscuits instead of y'know cookies?"

"Because, dear. Harry made them, and sent them along with this tea as a thank you for when he visited. Quite the gentleman!" replied Martha with a smile.

"Ma! You know he is a criminal! What if he poisoned the tea or is putting Mind Control stuff in the cookies!" gasped Kara.

"Well, I'd say you are in quite a bit of trouble, seeing as how you ate half the platter of cookies, aren't you?" asked Martha with a smile. "Besides, that was all just a misunderstanding. Harry is a good boy!"

"I can't help it, they taste so good! Besides, Diana brought the snacks tonight and she cooks worse than me!" complained Kara. She sighed again. "Why is it all the good men are either taken, possessed, supervillains, insane, half machine, or well..." trailed off Kara with a blush, looking over her shoulder at the framed picture of her cousin Clark.

Martha looked at Kara for a moment, and smiled.

"Kara, would you be a dear and do me a favor. I just baked a pie, and Harry so loved my pie the last time he was here. Would you take this to him?"

Martha laughed to herself, Harry may not be as strong as Clark, but he was still quite handy, and he was cute.

Martha always had been a sucker for strays.

She would have grand babies, dammit!

which led to this:

Harry was sitting down for the now regular Sunday dinner with Ma Kent and Kara.

"This Beef Bourguignon is fabulous Ma Kent! It's like heaven melts in your mouth with each bite!" raved Harry, spooning an additional helping on to his plate. "Are you sure everyone has enough? I don't

want to make a pig of myself."

"No, it's fine dear, I made plenty. Besides, we wouldn't want any leftovers!" said Martha with a smile.

\*BOOM!\*

The whole house seemed to shake on it's very foundations, as dust came floating down from the ceiling.

Harry leapt to his feet, drawing his wand as he scanned for threats. "Was that an earthquake or an explosion or something? Maybe we need to get you down to the shelter Mrs. Kent" said a worried Harry.

Kara merely snorted, before rolling her eyes.

"No worries dear, just someone throwing a bit of a tantrum upstairs. WHO'S GOING TO BE STAYING UPSTAIRS UNTIL HE CAN LEARN TO MIND HIS MANNERS AND THINK ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF HIS ACTIONS, LIKE HIS MOTHER RAISED HIM TO!" shouted Martha, before serving Harry the last portion of the main course. She stopped for a moment, and tilted her head to the side.

"DON'T THINK I CAN'T HEAR YOU MUTTERING UNDER YOUR BREATH UP THERE YOUNG MAN! YOU'RE NOT SO OLD I WON'T WASH YOUR MOUTH OUT WITH SOAP!" yelled Martha.

Kara covered her mouth and giggled, before leaning over to whisper in Harry's ear, "Super hearing has nothing on Mom-hearing".

Harry merely smiled before asking the superheroine, "I'm surprised you didn't change out of your uniform into something more comfortable since you are off duty?"

Kara smiled, just as Martha interjected, "Oh, she is on call, so it's easier to just be prepared"

Harry was about to reply when the hairs on his neck suddenly stood on end.



Harry felt the magic in the room seem to twist and fold in on itself, as a loud BOOM shook the room.

Suddenly a large portal formed in the center of the room. Out of the portal stepped a rather fat woman in some sort of bizarre body armor/fetish gear. She was dragging a skinny young red headed boy behind her.

"GRANNY GOODNESS IS HERE TO ADD TO HER ONE BIG HAPPY FAMILY! COME ALONG NOW SUPERGIRL, IT'S TIME YOU CAME BACK TO BE WITH MY LITTLE BOY!" screeched the old harridan as she reached for a pale Kara.

Harry quickly cast a shield spell before inserting himself between Kara and the oddly familiar crazy lady. "Sorry, miss, we just sat down for dinner, you'll have to come back some other time" said Harry, in a calm tone.

"OOOH! AREN'T YOU ARE A STRONG ONE? I THINK I'LL BREED YOU WITH MY GINPIG HERE!" shouted the insane lady.

Harry raised an eyebrow.

"Silencio! Don't you know it's rude to shout all the time? Waitasec. Did you say, GinPig?" said a paling Harry.

The boy next to the insane lady looked up upon hearing their name.

Harry gasped in shock. The boy was actually a skinnier version of Ginny Weasley!

Harry looked over his shoulder at Martha Kent, and towards a shivering Kara, in her skintight costume, and amazingly short flared skirt.

He turned back around to realize he was looking at this universe's version of Molly Weasley and her daughter.

With a shiver, he cast a banishing charm, knocking them both back into their portal. It promptly disappeared, and Harry sagged into a nearby chair.

"Ok, first, someone explain what the hell just happened," said a jittery Harry.

"Scratch that, first I am putting up some wards to prevent those two from coming back. Then I want a bottle of whiskey and some explanations."

Not the Author's Note: Polish provided by dogbertcarroll

Omake by meteoricshipyards

Harry stopped causes his two companions to almost stumble. He tightened his hold around their waists until they were stable, and then removed his right hand from the blond girl next to him to get access to his wand.

She looked at him disappointed. "What's the matter, Harry?" Kara asked.

Harry had let go of Zatanna, too, and was trying to look all directions at once while holding his wand at ready.

"I'm not sure. There's some sort of magic buildup. . ."

At that point the buildup reached a critical level and a hole appeared in the universe with a sound not unlike the seat of a pair of trousers giving way. The two superheroes with Harry detected a oppressive feeling of embarrassment.

"I think it worked, Hermione," Ron's voice came out of the multidimensional blackness.

"Told you," Hermione's voice followed.

"Ron? Hermione?"

"HARRY!" Hermione yelled.

"Hey mate!" Ron exclaimed. "Are we glad this worked. Dumbledore kept going on and on about how much danger you could be in. . ."

Harry looked at Kara and Zatanna. "Well, I'm with two of the most dangerous women in the world."

"Oh my God, Harry! Hang on, we'll come rescue you."

"That's alright, I don't need rescuing."

"It's alright mate, don't worry! We'll take care of it."

"No, you don't understand. I'm not in danger."

"True," Kara said. "We're not at your hotel room yet."

"This is more serious than I imagined," the voice of Albus Dumbledore floated through the hyper-rip. "He has fallen to the temptation of the dark side."

"Harry!" Kara exclaimed, "you didn't tell us you colored your hair."

"I don't! This is my real hair colour!"

"See, whoever you are," the blond alien woman shouted at the Rift. "He's always had dark hair, so leave him alone. It looks good on him."

"I'm not talking about his hair! I'm talking about dark magic and moral choices!"

"I haven't used any dark magic," Harry said.

"Except that Nox spell so neither of us had to get up and put out the light," Zatanna added.

"Nox isn't dark," Ron said.

"No, it's too perilous to leave him there," Dumbledore didn't appear to be talking to the Harry. "We must bring him home for the Greater Good."

"I think my greater good says I need to stay here, so goodbye everyone! Finite!"

The non-euclidian hole closed in a non-euclidian way, with a hyper-harmonic clang and an accompanying feeling of verigo.

"What was that all about, Harry?" Kara asked.

"Just some people I used to know. Hopefully, there will be no more interruptions, 'cause I've still got three, front row tickets to the concert."

"YES!" the girls yelled.

"Yeah, but without Rick Wakeman," Harry mumbled as they went off to enjoy their future.

Tom A.  
Some ideas stolen from Monty Python.

Not the Author's Note: Polish provided by dogbertcarroll

Omake by Jim Compton

Will they also have to Mirandize the bad guys?

I can just see the league standing there with a big pile of bad guys and looking around, "Okay. Who has the card we have to read to these yahoos? Flash, would you mind going back and getting the card? I don't want any of these getting off on a technicality... AGAIN! Last time, Two Face was caught dead to rights, and they had to let him go because Worm-man over there didn't read it off the card!"

The Dark Worm growled at Pervman... er, Superman until Wonder Woman yanked hard on his leash.

Not the Author's Note: Polish provided by dogbertcarroll

Mini Omake: Harry's response to the caped crew taking umbrage to his more permanent way of dealing things by dogbertcarroll

"I call it self defense. You may be powerful enough to survive these nutbars trying to kill you, but I'm not. So rather than risk my life in a futile effort to take him alive, so he can escape and kill others, I just

defended my self, something I am capable and legally entitled to do."

Disclaimer: This also goes with 'Sands of Time'

Omake by me: He is the one called Harry Potter

Harry's mouth tasted like the color yellow and his eyes felt like they were filled with sand. Tackling Voldemort hadn't been one of his better ideas, Harry reflected to himself.

"Should have just used a banishing charm or something," Harry muttered to himself. Or anything else that didn't involve going through the veil with his nemesis, really not one of his better ideas.

Harry was torn from his musings by the arrival of several scantily clad cheerleaders chattering in some foreign language. This held his attention for a few seconds before he decided to go off in search of someone that could help him contact one of his friends, or at the very least someone who spoke English.

A frown appeared on Harry's face when one of the cheerleaders threw a bolt of lightning in his general direction. Granted it missed and caused untold thousands in property damage, but it was the principle of the thing.

"That's the way you wanna play it, huh?" Harry growled. "Okay, we can play. Petrificus Totalus, Petrificus Totalus, Petrificus Totalus. Stupid cheerleaders," he said to his defeated foes. Who knew they'd take him ignoring their performance so badly? Perhaps Vernon was right when he said that artistic types were flighty and should all be locked up? The horrifying concept that Vernon could be right about

anything nearly caused Harry to vomit and he stumbled away clutching his stomach.

|||||||

At the gates of time, Pluto dropped to the ground clutching her head as unimaginable pain wracked her body. She screamed and screamed until her throat was raw and sore, course on Pluto there was no one to hear her scream.

|||||||

Usagi was the first of the Pretty Sailor Scouts to regain the ability to move shortly followed by Jupiter. In the time she'd been frozen, she'd had ample time to go over the battle to figure out what had gone wrong.

They'd arrived in the park to find the newest Dark General standing in the middle of a charred section of grass. She had then launched her speech about how parks were places to relax, the general had gotten bored and begun to wander off. Jupiter had then flung an attack at him and then the General had defeated all of them with some sort of odd magical attack. To be quite frank, she was mystified by their defeat as it appeared that they'd done everything right on their end. The only thing she could think to attribute their defeat to was the fact that the Dark General hadn't been polite enough to listen to their speech. A chill went down the girl's back as she considered the idea that future enemies might not wait politely until she had finished their introductory speeches, heaven help them all if that happened.

"We need to have a meeting to talk about what happened," Usagi said to her friends.

|||||||

Pluto gasped for breath as she tried to figure out what had happened. Was it an attack of some sort? A side effect of having lived so long. The oldest active Sailor Scout automatically reached out for a bottle of aspirin, freezing in mid gesture. There was no pain, she thought in

wonder, her headache was gone. The headache that she'd suffered for thousands of years was gone. That could only mean . . .

Pluto rushed to the time gates to confirm her suspicion. Crystal Tokyo was no more, it had ceased to be and there was no way to force the time line back. With no way of resurrecting the remnants of the Moon Kingdom, the Queen's geas had shattered. She was free, for the first time in thousands of years, perhaps ever, the Senshi of Pluto was free.

Pluto wept as she contemplated what she'd done, the crimes she'd been forced to commit, the innocent lives destroyed, the knowledge lost, just so a spoiled little girl could have her castle. Setsuna stopped just short of declaring eternal gratitude to her savior. She'd just been freed of her bonds and was less than eager to find a new set, still . . . it couldn't hurt to find out a bit of information, could it?

IIIIIIIIII

Ami looked around the group, no one was willing to vocalize what they were all thinking. She took a deep breath and let it out, why did it always have to fall to her?

"I think we made a mistake," she said softly. Every eye turned to regard the smartest Senshi.

"What do you mean, Ami?" Makoto demanded.

"Yeah," Usagi whined. She was still more than a bit annoyed at the way he'd ignored her speech.

"I think . . . I think that the boy in the park wasn't a Dark General," Ami said reluctantly. "Maybe he was here to help us?"

"There was a cute boy and you guys drove him away?" Minako wailed.

"Ami didn't say he was cute," Rei pointed out.

"But he was, wasn't he?" Minako persisted.

"He had gorgeous eyes," Ami said with a blush.

"He looked just like . . ." Mokoto began.

"Your old sempai right?"

"No, better than my old sempai. He looked just like a movie star." Makoto's eyes glazed as she lost herself in fantasy.

The girls shared a collective sigh.

"And he was also speaking English so he might not have understood what we were saying," Ami continued. "And he seemed . . . uh . . . annoyed when we attacked him. With the casual way he defeated us added to the fact that his attack didn't do any damage, well . . ."

"You chased off a cute foreign boy," Minako sobbed, "now I'll never get a boyfriend."

IIIIIIII

Pluto frowned in confusion. It was if the boy, her savior, had no past. Resolving to settle the issue later, she decided to check the future, or rather the most likely possible future.

The gates displayed a powerful looking man sitting on a large throne. Reclining at his feet with her head rested on his leg was . . . her. Setsuna licked her lips unconsciously as the view widened to reveal the rest of the senshi laying around the room in various states of undress.

Setsuna gasped when the man suddenly raised his head to stare back at her with a set of the greenest eyes. They maintained eye contact for a few moments until the image shattered.

She needed to think on what she'd seen, well after she changed her panties anyway. She shivered in pleasure, that was one future she couldn't wait to experience.

IIIIIIII



Harry was lucky in that one of the things he'd looted, er . . . liberated from the Ministry had been a large case of survival supplies for the muggle world. Buried underneath a stone knife and a pair of jodhpurs had been a packet of pills, each able to impart proficiency in a skill or language. Happily gulping the Japanese language skill, he did a bit more digging and was lucky enough to find a small stack of the local currency.

"Excuse me," he called out to one of the locals.

"What can I do for you?" the man asked.

"Do you happen to know where I might find something to eat?" Harry asked hopefully.

"Of course," he agreed. "That shop there sells ramen, the one next to it sells gyudon, the one across the street sells okonomiyaki, and if all else fails you can eat at a convenience store such as the one on that corner there or that corner there or across the street."

"Than you."

"Happy to be of service," the man replied.

IIIIIIIIII

Mamoru was on his way to a meeting when he found himself surrounded by several dozen large police officers.

"That's him!" one of the detectives shouted.

"Get the sick bastard!" another agreed.

The senshi watched in helpless shock as half a dozen police officers beat Mamoru into a bloody pulp.

"I'm innocent!" Mamoru screamed as the police dragged him away.  
"You've got to believe me!"

"What's going on?" Usagi whimpered.

"He's being arrested for possession of child pornography, production of child pornography, sale of child pornography, chicken sodomy, and tax evasion," Setsuna replied. She absolutely did not smirk when Usagi screamed in shock and seemed to levitate off the ground. "Shame I couldn't prevent it, but I didn't have enough warning. The time stream works in mysterious ways."

"You've got the wrong guy!" Mamoru shrieked as the police car drove off. The girls listened to his fading pleas of innocence for a few moments before turning back to the oldest senshi.

"I guess I should have seen this coming," Setsuna murmured thoughtfully. She was the one that phoned in the tip after all. Shame all the evidence she'd cooked up to frame him hadn't been needed.

"What do you mean?" Ami asked.

"Well, he did have an unhealthy interest in young boys back in the past. Avoiding scandal is one of the reasons his parents sent him to the moon to be engaged to Usagi."

"You mean it wasn't love at first sight?" Usagi whimpered.

"Heavens no, people in your station rarely got to marry for love. Matters of state always take precedence," Setsuna explained.

IIIIIIIIII

Mamoru shivered in fear as he was thrown naked into his cell. He was sure it was all a mistake and he'd be out and on his way in no time.

"I'm Dr. Rockso the Rock and Roll Clown!" a strange voice called out from one of the other cells. "I do cocaine!"

Someone would be here in no time to get him out, he told himself, he wouldn't be here for long and this would all turn into an amusing story to tell later.

AN: Really not into this idea, really not impressed by how it came out either. Assuming I did write it, I'm fairly sure I'd end it with everyone showing up to stage the vision Setsuna had of the future so she thinks there'd be a harem ending and then have the girls all leave with their significant others.

Typos by: ubereng

## Second Chances

The last thing he remembered was his spy solidifying his place in the Dark Lord's inner circle with an act of mercy and then everything went dark for a time. When he became aware, Albus had the sensation of floating in a warm safe place. The pain in his arm was gone, the knowledge he had been burdened with had disappeared, all was right in the world. He didn't know how long he was there; seconds, hours, days, years, centuries? Time had no meaning, everything was perfect.

"Albus!" Minerva's cry snapped him out of perfection.

"Minerva?" he croaked, why did she look so young? In a flash, the pain returned. The aches one acquires in over a century of life all the more intense thanks to the recent memory of their absence, the mantle of responsibility so much heavier.

"You called us here, what do you want?" Minerva demanded.

"You tol me I hadda go to the Potter's house," Hagrid offered cautiously.

"Yes," Albus agreed. A moment of concentration on the wards he was tied to brought nothing but confusion. It wasn't possible.

"Has something happened to Lily and James?" Minerva asked; she appeared to be bracing herself for the worst.

"I'm afraid so," Albus replied gravely, letting what he was sure was a memory play out. "The wards report that there are no signs of adult life in the house." He hadn't spoken to Minerva and Hagrid at the same time, had he? His eyes darted around finding other minor differences from what he remembered as the state of his office in the past.

"No!" Minerva sobbed.

"What do you want me to do, Headmaster?" Hagrid asked, straightening to his full height.

"There is a chance that Harry survived," Dumbledore replied. "I need you to take him and . . . and . . ." and what if this was not a memory? What if he had a chance to put things right, to undo his folly? Was there a chance that the universe would be so kind to an old fool?

"And what, Headmaster?" Hagrid prompted.

"And take him to St. Mungos," Albus replied, "along with anyone else you meet at the house." He would not repeat past mistakes, he would do what he should have done, he would not allow the individuals to get lost in his vision of the greater good.

"Yes, Headmaster," Hagrid agreed.

"Friend or foe," Albus said firmly, "if it's a Death Eater, all I ask is that they're in a large enough piece to be able to answer questions. If it's a friend, bring them in, break their legs if you have to but bring them in. James' friends should be arriving about the same time you do, on your life do not let them run off for any reason. Remind them of their duty to young Harry, remind them of their duty to the Order, and if all else fails remind them of the fact that you can shatter stone with your fists but do not let them run off!" The idea that men could change for the better was something he'd always believed, it was the reason he'd taken Severus in, the reason he'd offered the man employment. If Severus could change, then why not an old fool like himself?

"Yes, Headmaster," Hagrid agreed.

"Thank you," Albus said, releasing the tension. He pulled a sock out of his pocket. "Portus. This will take you to the Potter house. Good luck, Hagrid." He knew not why he'd been granted this chance, but he would be damned if he'd allow it to slip through his fingers.

"Should I go with him?" Minerva asked.

"No." Albus watched the half giant disappear. "I have another task for you, if you will accept it. It is in some ways easier and in others far more difficult."

"I did, Headmaster," Minerva agreed.

"So you know her sister?" Albus persisted.

"We met once or twice," Minerva replied. "Why?"

"Would you take care of notification?" Albus sighed. "It is both something that should take place in person and something that is something I should do myself, but I fear that I shall have other duties occupying my time for the foreseeable future."

"I'll take care of it for you, Albus," Minerva promised.

"Thank you, Minerva, I shall ever be in your debt." He handed the woman a second portkey and watched her leave.

Ten years to find and destroy as many of Tom's soul fragments as possible, ten years to deliver the Coup de grâce, to put Tom out of everyone's misery, ten years to do or die trying.

Albus smiled, success would allow him some measure of peace. Failure would return him to death's embrace. What did he have to lose?

"The Ministry first," he said to himself, "best to have a team from the Department of Mysteries and Magical Law Enforcement on the scene before anything else."

|||||

Sirius sprung to his feet seconds after the Healers repaired his shattered limbs. He had a rat to find, a traitor to kill, a . . . familiar sharp pain in his left arm.

Hagrid calmly snapped the wizard's other arm followed by both legs. "Dumbledore told me not to let you go."

"Are you going to do that again if I heal him again?" the Healer asked.

"If he tries to leave before Dumbledore gets here," Hagrid agreed.

"Alright." The Healer flicked her wand, immobilizing the limbs. "We'll do it the slow way."

"You have to let me go!" Sirius bellowed. "I have to kill the traitor, I have to avenge Lily and James!"

"Anythin you can do to keep him quiet?" Hagrid asked hopefully.

"No problem," the Healer said with a grin.

They both watched the purple faced Sirius scream in silent rage for a few minutes until Dumbledore arrived.

"Thank you for holding him for me, Hagrid," Dumbledore said. He turned to the healer. "Would you mind removing your silencing spell, Ms. O'Day?"

"Not at all, Headmaster Dumbledore," she replied.

"What's the big idea?" Sirius growled in good imitation to his animagus form.

"The Potters are dead, that means we have a traitor," Dumbledore said calmly. "At the moment, as the secret keeper, you are my primary suspect."

"I wasn't the secret keeper," Sirius replied, "it was Peter. Now fix my bones and let me go so I can kill him!"

"Look into my eyes, Mr. Black," Dumbledore ordered. He found what he knew he would. "Fix him please, Healer O'day."

"Yes, Headmaster Dumbledore," she agreed.

"Sirius, I'm going to have to ask you to set aside your vengeance for now," Dumbledore said in his grandfatherly voice.

"Like hell," Sirius growled.

"I've thought you many things over the years, but I never thought you would shirk your duty to James and Lily," Dumbledore said sadly. "It is a pity to be so wrong about a wizard's character."

"What do you mean by that?" Sirius demanded.

"Lily and James are dead, yet their son Harry lives. Where does your duty lie? In avenging the dead or in looking after their son?" Dumbledore gave a bitter laugh. "Or is it selfishness that's motivating you? Are you unwilling to do your duty as the boy's godfather?"

Sirius seemed to collapse. "You're right," he whispered, almost too low to hear.

"What was that, Mr. Black?" Dumbledore barked.

"I said you're right," Sirius replied, "I should have been thinking about Harry, not Peter."

"It seems I was right about his character after all, 'eh, Hagrid?"

"Yer seldom wrong about these things, Headmaster," Hagrid replied with a wide toothy grin.

"How did you get Hagrid to the Potter house so fast, Albus?" Sirius asked, rubbing his newly mended limbs.

"I suspected that there would be an attack on the Potters or the Longbottoms so I . . ." How could he have forgotten? "THE LONGBOTTOMS!" Albus shouted. "Contact the Aurors and tell them I suspect that two of their own are in trouble. Ms. O'day, have the hospital ready to receive casualties!" He pulled another sock out of his pocket and hastily made a portkey. "I shall do what I can," he promised as he disappeared.

IIIIIIII

Alice felt her teeth crack as her jaw clenched. She was helpless against the pain, unable to do anything but wallow in the sensation of agony.



"CRUCIO, you stupid bitch!" the Death Eater laughed. "Perhaps we should give your brat a dose next?"

The other three Death Eaters seemed to find the suggestion hilarious, they stopped laughing when a giant stone hand burst out of the ground and crushed one of their number into jelly. The second death eater fell when a stone lion melted out of the ground to tear out his throat.

"Who are you?" one of the two surviving Death Eaters screamed. "Show yourk." The man fell as his mask first wrapped around his head and then shrunk, shattering his skull.

"Come out of the brat gets it!" the last Death Eater called shrilly. The woman screamed in pain as a dark curse hit her wand arm, causing it vanish into a pink mist.

"All you had to do was say please," Dumbledore said calmly, stepping out of the shadows. Another flick of the wand turned the woman's now empty sleeve into a tourniquet to stem the bleeding and a last flick of his wand encased her in ropes.

"Dmbldre?" Alice wheezed.

"Frank and Neville are alive," Dumbledore said calmly, "everything looks fixable." He let none of the relief he felt at that statement color his voice.

"Wnted me ta tll wer d'rk bstard wz," she coughed.

"Rest," he commanded, hitting her with every healing spell he knew. He created three portkeys and sent each member of the family on their way, one after the other, before returning to other matters. "Shame we had to meet again under such circumstances, Mrs. Lestranger."

"The Dark Lord will destroy you for this outrage!" Bellatrix screamed. "I'll see everyone of the brats at your damned school dead for this."

"There is only one thing keeping you alive at the moment and that is the fact that you have something I need," Dumbledore said calmly, hating the necessity of what he was about to do.

"I'll die before I give you anything!" she spat.

"No, you'll die after," Dumbledore disagreed. "Rest assured, Mrs. Lestrage, you will give me what I need no matter what I must do to have it."

The sense of unrelenting certainty in the old wizard's eyes broke through the witch's madness and she stared at the old man in naked terror. Too late she understood her master's caution when it came to the old man.

IIIIIIIIII

The Auror team arrived to find the leader of the light, Albus Dumbledore, emptying his stomach onto the cobblestone street amidst the remains of his defeated foes.

"Alright there, Albus?" the lead Auror asked.

"Been better, Alastor," the Headmaster replied, wiping his sleeve across his lips to clear away the vomit. "Longbottoms make it alright?"

"Healers think that Alice is going to have permanent nerve damage from too much of the pain curse," Moody replied.

"Damn me for taking too long," Albus cursed.

"You got here soon enough," Moody assured his friend.

"I need you to send a runner to the Department of Mysteries, tell them that I believe I may be able to confirm the theory I gave them and that the evidence is in the Lestrage vault," he said.

"Be difficult to get it out of there," Moody opinioned.

"I had a short conversation with the late Mrs. Lestrangle and she expressed her wish that the contents of the Lestrangle vault be distributed among their victims and the families of their victims minus any dark objects," Albus said impassively. "She even signed papers to that effect."

Moody stared at the other man for a few seconds. "I'll assume you had your reasons and that your reasons were good ones."

"The road to hell, Alastor, I'll trust that as my friend you'll never allow me that leeway again."

"As your friend, you may count on it, Albus," Moody agreed.

"Thank you, Alastor. If you will excuse me, I have a meeting with the Minister that can not be postponed."

"Good luck with that, Albus," Moody said. He watched the other wizard disappear before turning his attention back to the crime scene.

"What was that about?" his number two, a girl barely out of Hogwarts asked.

"He decided to stop playing around, Bones," Moody replied.

"But?" she looked lost.

"Isn't just rumor when they say that Albus Dumbledore is the only wizard you-know fears." Moody waved at the blood stained street. "Four of 'em, four nasty buggers against one man."

"Fat lot of good numbers did 'em," one of the junior Aurors commented.

"You hear all your life that he's the most powerful wizard in the United Kingdom, doesn't sink in till you see something like this too though, does it?" Moody agreed. "Enough standing around. Jones, you heard what Dumbledore wants us to pass on to the Department of Mysteries?"

"He thinks he has proof for his theory in the Lestrangle vault and Bellatrix had a sudden change of heart so getting in won't be a problem," the Auror repeated.

"Right, move!" Moody barked. "Bones."

"Record the crime scene, set up a perimeter, you'll give me my grade later," Bones grumbled, "I still think you're just lazy and pushing all your work on me."

IIIIIIIIII

Minister Millicent Bagnold emerged from a rather uncomfortable meeting with the Chief Wizard to find a dozen reporters waiting. Say what you would about the old bastard, he was a master at political games when he wanted to be.

"What's the press conference about?" one of the reporters demanded.

"You are?" the Minister asked.

"Dirk Dickson from the Prophet," the reporter replied.

"It's about several things," she said, "you'll have an opportunity to ask questions at the end if we have time." She took a deep breath. "To start with, we have indications that 'he-who-must-not-be-named' has been defeated and seriously injured at the wands of Lily and James Potter."

"How seriously?" one of the reporters blurted.

"I believe I told you to hold questions till the end," she said coldly. "Enough that he won't be a problem for quite some time, he appears to have lost his body in the duel. Unfortunately, the Potters were killed in the exchange and their son was gravely wounded by an unknown curse." She closed her eyes, bracing herself for what was to come.

"Just before I came out, I signed my resignation with Dumbledore as a witness effective half an hour from now. It was not an easy choice,

but I believe it was the right one given the circumstances." She forced herself to smile. "A number of Death Eaters offered me a large amount of gold for pardons, I accepted." The room went wild and she allowed them to chatter for a few moments.

"SILENCE!" she bellowed. "I have here a stack of unsigned pardons. I intend to sign them and use the illegal portkey in my pocket to transport myself somewhere that does not have an extradition treaty with us."

"Minister, you can't be serious?" her aide stammered.

"Dead serious," she replied, reaching into her pocket. "Oh my, it seems that I do not have a quill with me. Does anyone have one I could borrow?" Grins began to appear as people divined her game. "No? Well, I suppose I could send my aide down to Diagon Alley to purchase one for me."

"Might be delayed, Minister," her aide said with a wide grin, "what with the celebrations and the fact that it's time for me to take my lunch break."

"Do your best," she replied, "wouldn't want you to get back after my resignation took effect and I no longer had the power to sign these pardons."

"Be a terrible thing, Minister," the aide agreed.

"Hmmm, I suppose I could have you step outside to buy a muggle pen," she mused. "No, no that wouldn't work. I'm sure all these Death Eaters would just hate to have their freedom because of a muggle device. Better to send you down for a quill and hope that you get back in time."

"Right you are, Minister," the aide walked to the back of the room to watch the rest of the show. He hadn't thought the old girl had it in her.

"I believe some of you had some questions you wanted to ask me?" the Minister prompted.

'Dumbledore was right,' Bagnold reflected to herself a few minutes later as the question and answer session wound to a close, 'this was fun.' Pity about losing her position, but at least she got to keep the gold and stay out of Azkaban. Not to mention the legacy she was leaving behind. Bagnold the crafty, she rather liked the sound of that, she had to remember to send a note suggesting it to the Prophet.

"I'm afraid that's all the time I have to answer questions," the Minister said, holding up her hand. "Oh my, it seems my aide hasn't returned with a quill. I'd fire him if I had a quill to fill out the termination paperwork."

"But you don't," one of the reporters called out, setting off another round of laughter.

"Such is life," she agreed. She reached into her pocket and pulled out a quill. "Oops, what do you know, it was in my left pocket the whole time." She dropped it on the podium. "Enough time to sign one pardon, who should it be?" She pressed it on the top piece of parchment. "Never mind, don't suppose anyone has any ink do they?"

That set off another round of laughter.

"Thought not," she sighed, "and with that, it's time for me to take my leave."

The reporters were still laughing when Dumbledore's portkey activated. She hoped it would take her some place warm, it would be absolutely wretched to live out her exile in a frozen wasteland.

AN: Idea is that Dumbledore spent most of the future watching his plans come to fruition and filled with regrets at what he saw as his past mistakes, is killed by Snape, and given a chance to do things again.

Beta by dogbertcarroll

More Polish by ubereng

## Omake: A Good Friend

Petunia awoke with a start, there was something wrong. "Vernon," she whispered.

"He's not going to respond," a voice from her past said calmly. "I made sure of that."

"Is he . . ." she choked.

"Quite dead," the voice agreed. "I've spent the last five minutes trying to decide if you and your brat should join him."

"Severus, please . . ."

"Shut up!" Snape barked. "You were expected to do a simple thing, to do something anyone with a trace of human decency would do." He stepped out of the shadows, allowing the full weight of his glare to fall on the woman. "It took me four years to ferret out where the boy had been hidden, four years I'd been sure were wasted. After all, the great Albus Dumbledore would never put the 'chosen one' in a less than ideal environment would he?"

"I didn't have a choice," Petunia squeaked. "Vernon . . ."

"Is dead and beyond blame," Snape interrupted. "It took me another six months to find the time to visit." The debt on his soul had never before felt so heavy. "Do you know what I saw when I made my visit?"

"Vernon said he needed to earn his keep," Petunia said weakly. And she'd loved the idea of pushing work on someone else.

"I found the boy doing garden work in filthy cast offs," Snape continued, ignoring the woman. "It made me uneasy, but I managed to convince myself that it was normal. Families allow children to help with work all the time, and simple prudence dictates that they be dressed in old clothing. Satisfied that I'd done my duty to the only friend I've ever had, I went home." And condemned a child to another week in hell. "I came back this morning to lay my doubts to rest." His

eyes were burning with rage. "What I learned earned your Vernon a painful death, choking, reaching for you, and begging me to do anything if only it would stop the pain." He'd gotten careless, the man had broken after only an hour. "Which still leaves the question of what to do with you and your brat."

"Please, Severus, not Dudley, I'll do anything," Petunia sobbed.

"You are going to go to sleep," Severus decided. "In three hours, you'll be awoken by a fire or you will sleep through it. Assuming you live, you will take your child and you will run, you will disappear, you will do everything in your power to avoid notice, and if you are lucky, it will be enough to make the bother of finding you to great." He raised his wand. "Because some time in the future, my sense of professionalism will compel me to complete the job I started tonight."

Snape hit the woman with a spell. He'd given the child a measure of vengeance against some of his tormentors, perhaps it would let look himself in the mirror again? He should be so lucky. A tear rolled down his cheek as he thought about what his carelessness had allowed to happen. The child of the only friend he'd ever had, the child of the only woman he'd ever loved, and he'd been too busy to look in on the lad more than once? It was time to tell the old man what his foolishness had permitted, time to bring things to a close. With luck, a potion in the bastard's tea would take care of things. If not? Well, perhaps he'd get lucky. The worst that could happen was a messy death at the end of the bastard's wand, he should be so lucky.

"Damn me," Severus whispered to himself.

AN: Could be rewritten without too much trouble into the beginning of a Snape raises Harry fic I suppose.



I like it here, I love it here, I finally found a home

"Bloody hell, he can't be." Amelia's jaw dropped.

"Madame Bones," Tonks began nervously, "meet my cousin, Harry Potter. I rescued him from his muggle relatives earlier today."

"This changes things a bit," Amelia sighed.

"I won't have to go back, will I?" Harry squeaked.

"Not while I'm still alive," Tonks growled, tightening her grip on the boy.

"Nor I," Amelia agreed, pasting a smile on her face. "Why don't you have a seat in my chair, Harry? Trainee Tonks and I need to do something outside for a bit. Just knock on the door if you need either of us, alright?" Harry nodded. "Good. Come along, Trainee Tonks."

"Yes, Madame Bones." She leaned down to ruffle the boy's hair. "I promised I'd look after you, didn't I?"

Amelia waited until the door was closed and the charms were up before springing into action. "Shack!"

"Boss?"

"Tell the Commandant that I've decided to commandeer one of his trainees and that I want him ready for a meeting later."

"Yes, Boss."

"Henderson!" Amelia barked.

"Madame?"

"Get Healer Rage up here yesterday," she ordered. "Tell her I need the works done on a juvenile male."

"Will comply, Madame."

"Sandhurst." She turned to a large woman in muggle attire. "Pass on to our counterparts in the muggle world that I may have a case for them, be some crossover in any case."

"Got it, boss."

"Trainee Tonks."

"Yes, Madame Bones?"

"Do you know where the break room is?"

"I think so, Madame Bones," Tonks replied cautiously.

"It's out the door, to the left, on the right, red door," Amelia recited. "Go in and get something for your cousin to eat. Don't bother knocking on my door when you return, just come in."

"Yes, Madame Bones. Thank you, Madame Bones."

Amelia watched the girl scurry off before stepping back into her office. 'What a mess, what a pure bloody mess,' she thought to herself as she looked at the miserable child in her seat.

"Do you want your chair back, Madame Bones?" Harry asked.

"You can keep it for now," Amelia replied. "I've sent your cousin off to get you something to eat, she should be back in a couple minutes."

"Thank you," Harry said softly. "She's not . . . she's not in any trouble for helping me, is she?"

"No, the only way this mess could get her on my bad side is if she hadn't helped you and we'll see." She remembered to smile.

"What's going to happen now?" Harry asked.

"What do you want to happen?" Amelia replied, curious to hear the answer.

"I want to stay with Tonks," Harry said, "can I?"

"I'll see what I can arrange," Amelia promised. "You know my niece, Susan, don't you?"

"Yes, Madame Bones," Harry agreed.

"Why don't you call me Amelia?" she suggested, hoping to put the child at ease. "I've got to be strict with your cousin because she's one of my new recruits, you're not."

"Okay, Amelia," Harry agreed.

"I've got a healer coming up here to take a look at you." Amelia sat on her desk. "I'm also going to want you to answer a few questions about what happened."

"Do I have to?" Harry looked stricken.

"I need to know what happened so I can figure out what to do next," Amelia said gently. "Always try to have as much information available as you can."

"Could I write it down instead?" Harry asked hopefully.

"You can do that too," Amelia agreed. "I still might have a few questions, but you can certainly write it down if that's what you want."

The door burst open and Tonks stumbled in juggling three wrapped sandwiches, two cups of tea, and a box of doughnuts.

"Steady," Amelia said, reliving the girl of her burden.

"One in the white mug is yours, Madame Bones," Tonks reported. "No sugar, finger of milk like they said you like it." She grabbed one of the sandwiches and gave it to Harry. "Bacon and cheddar for you. No sugar in the tea."

"Didn't get yourself anything?" Amelia asked.

"No, Madame Bones."

"Next time, do so, even if it means you need to ask for help to carry it all back."

"I will, Madame Bones."

"Good. Now stick your head out and tell them you need a form ten twenty-five, a form ID ten T and a form fifteen sixty-one."

Tonks returned a moment later with both forms.

"The ten twenty-five is for your cousin and the form fifteen sixty-one is for you. Fill them out."

Amelia gave the matter a bit of thought as she watched the two fill out the paperwork. On the subject of what to do with the boy over the summer, several solutions presented themselves. One had the dual advantages of building a nice bit of political capital and making her niece deliriously happy.

She put that one at the top of the list.

"Finished?"

Someone knocked on the door.

"Come!"

"You called for me, Boss?" a voluptuous brunette in a tight fitting white robe asked politely.

"I want you to document and treat every injury you find on our young friend," Amelia ordered, waving at Harry. "By the book, if you please."

"Yes, boss." The woman turned to Harry with a smile. "Hello, I'm . . ."  
Her eyes flicked back to Amelia, getting a curt nod in reply. "I'm Healer Rage, I'm not going to tell you my first name because it's horrid. What's your name?"

"Harry," the boy replied.

"Now just sit still and tell me if you feel any discomfort," the healer said with a smile. "This shouldn't hurt a bit."

Amelia read the reports as the Healer checked over the boy. She chuckled as she went through Tonks' report, crossing out a few things and making a few corrections.

"Trainee Tonks."

"Yes, Madame Bones?"

"Find a way to rephrase the parts I crossed out so it doesn't sound incriminating and fix the spelling errors I marked," Amelia said, handing back the report. "Other than that, good work. I know twenty year Aurors that hand in worse."

"Thank you, Madame Bones." The girl smiled at the praise.

"Let me see it first," Healer Rage interjected. She glanced over it. "Consistent with what I found, boss."

"Anything that needs to be taken care of now?" Amelia demanded.

"Already took care of everything, boss."

"Good, write it up and get it back to me."

"Will do, boss."

There was another knock on the door. "Commandant here to see you, Madame Bones," the muffled voice of one of her aids reported.

"Send him in," Amelia ordered.

Healer Rage walked out as the Commandant walked in.

The Auror Academy Commandant's eyes flicked at Tonks and a frown appeared on his face. "What did she do?"

"Earned herself a commendation," Amelia replied. "Wanted to know if you wanted to sign it or if I should."

"Oh." The man's entire demeanor changed. "Probably be better for her career if you did. What happened?"

"The child next to her is her cousin, she rescued him from durance vile."

"Any reason you didn't bring this to me first, Trainee Tonks?" the Commandant asked with a raised eyebrow. "You know our opinions on breaking the chain of command."

"Wouldn't have done it if were just me, Commandant," Tonks said respectfully. "But I needed to go straight to the top to make sure my cousin was going to be protected."

"Why did you . . . bloody hell, it can't be," his voice squeaked.

"That's what I said," Amelia laughed. "Meet Harry Potter."

"A pleasure to meet you, young Mister Potter," the Commandant said with a smile. "I'd hoped our meeting would have taken place on your first day of training."

"Pleased to meet you too, sir," Harry said quietly, tightening his grip on Tonks' hand.

"How bout you sign the commendation and I'll countersign," the Commandant suggested.

"Works for me," Amelia agreed.

"Trainee Tonks!" he barked.

"Sir?"

"I must congratulate you on finding a better use of your pass than Fortescue's and the Cauldron. Most of your fellow trainees are feeling rather miserable at the moment."

"The surprise run you made them do might have something to do with that," Amelia laughed.

"It might," he agreed. "How long do you need her?"

"I'll try to have her back later today, should be no later than tomorrow afternoon."

"Was there anything else you needed?" he asked with a grin. "I'm afraid all this talking has put me in the mood for another run."

"Sadist," Amelia giggled. "Off with you."

"A pleasure as always," he said as he walked out of the room.

"Trainee Tonks," Amelia said as the door closed.

"Yes, Madame Bones?"

"If you ever tell anyone I giggled, I will make your life a living hell."

"Understood, Madame Bones."

"Wonderful." The smile reappeared on her face. "As to the matter of what to do with your cousin while you're in the Academy..."

"Yes, Madame Bones?"

"What do you say to the idea of leaving him with me over the summer until after you're out of the Academy?" Amelia suggested. "We can find a more permanent solution next year."

"I'd say that sounds good, Madame Bones," Tonks replied. "Harry and Susan get along quite well and I'd feel better if he was behind a good set of wards what with the . . . ah . . . security concerns." She looked down at the boy. "What do you think, Harry?"

"I don't mind living with Madame Bones for the summer until I go back to Hogwarts if I can't stay with you," Harry agreed.

"You can stay with me next year," Tonks promised, "after I'm out of training and have my own place."

"Wonderful." Amelia stood up and walked to the door. "Come along, children."

Hand in hand, the two cousins fell into step behind the Director.

"I'm heading out early today," Amelia announced as she locked the door to her office.

"Got your portkeys, boss," her aide reported, holding up a box. "Pick a portkey, any portkey."

"Why so many?" Harry asked.

"Security precaution, we have ten made by ten casters every day and then checked by ten other casters. Madame Bones picks one at random and that hopefully makes it difficult for anyone to mess with our beloved director," the aide explained.

"Oh."

"Why don't you come with me, Harry," Amelia suggested. "Your cousin can go with Merryweather."

"I'd really prefer to go with you, boss," the burly Auror said firmly.

"You're going to have to get over your fear of portkey travel some time," Amelia replied, ignoring the Auror's frown.

"Not so afraid of going without you as I am you going without me, boss," the Auror protested.



"I'll be perfectly fine with Harry along to protect me. He fought a mountain troll you know." Amelia held out the portkey for the boy. "Ready, Harry?"

"I guess so," Harry agreed.

"Then off we go," Amelia said, disappearing.

"Damn it, boss," the big Auror sighed. He grabbed a portkey and held it out to Tonks. "Touch it and we're off."

"Yes, Auror," Tonks agreed, touching the portkey.

The first thing they saw when they arrived was Amelia's smiling face.

"You see, all safe and sound," she said smugly. "They think I'm made of glass and will break without them to protect me," she confided to Harry.

"You're safe this time," one of her bodyguards conceded. "And she is made of glass, Harry. That's the reason we made her the Director, so we could keep her locked up in her office all day and out of the field."

"I knew it." Amelia sniffed. "Come on, Harry, I'll show you to your room," Amelia said. "Coming, Trainee Tonks?"

"Yes, Madame Bones," Tonks agreed, falling into step behind the older woman.

She took them up a large staircase and down a long hallway to a set of double doors. "This will be your room," Amelia said. "Susan is three doors up, the Aurors are three doors down, and I'm at the end of the hall."

"Any questions?"

"No, Amelia," Harry replied.

"Then I'll let you two get settled. Dinner will be in two or three hours, one of the house elves will come get you. Alright?"

"Alright, Madame Bones," Tonks agreed.

"Good."

"Come on, Harry." She squeezed the boy's shoulder. "Let's see if your new room is better than your old one."

Satisfying herself that the two would be fine without her, she set off to inform her niece of their new house guest.

"Susan," Amelia called out as she knocked on the frame of the girl's door.

"Yes, Aunty Amelia?"

"Do you remember how you told me you wanted Harry Potter for your birthday?" Amelia asked with a grin.

"I was . . . um . . ." The girl blushed a deep red.

"Well, it took some doing but he's in the bedroom down the hall and will be for the rest of the summer." Amelia smiled at the look of shock on her niece's face. "I know your birthday isn't for another week, but I didn't think he'd like it if I tried to hide him in my closet with your other presents."

Susan stood there gaping a good five minutes after her aunt had left, before she recovered and made a note to herself to be a bit more careful in her requests as apparently her aunt really could do anything!

IIIIIIIIII

Amelia was with her security detail when she noticed her Trainee trying to slink into the room.

"Everything alright with Harry?" Amelia asked.

"Fine, Madame Bones. The children are getting reacquainted and I wanted to give them a bit of privacy," Tonks explained.

"Oh?" The amount of meaning Amelia was able to inject into a single syllable was awe inspiring.

"Not like that, Madame Bones," Tonks giggled. "Not yet anyway."

"Oh," Amelia sighed. "Remind me to give the house elves a camera," she told one of the other Aurors.

"Will do, boss."

"Back to you, Trainee Tonks," Amelia said.

"Yes, Madame Bones?"

"Where were you planning to stay after you got out of the Academy?"

"Was going to get a cheap one room apartment if I could, Madame Bones," Tonks replied. "Going to have to find a larger one with good wards now that I have Harry."

"You're definitely planning to have him live with you?" Amelia asked.

"Yes, Madame Bones," Tonks agreed, "I promised him that I'd look after him so that's what I'm going to do."

"The Academy lets you out in October so you've got nearly a year to find a solution," Amelia mused. "Talk to me next April or May, I may have something for you if your performance is up to spec."

"Something, Madame Bones?"

"I might make you an aide or put you on my security detail," Amelia explained. "Give you a chance to keep your cousin under my wards again next summer."

"I understand, Madame Bones," Tonks said quickly, resolving to graduate at the top of her class and serve with distinction afterward.

"Good."

The rest of the night went rather quickly. They all sat down for a meal, the highlight of which was Tonks spooning another helping onto Harry's plate the second after he'd cleared it. After the meal, the children were packed off to bed while the adults retired to the smoking room for cigars and brandy until Tonks began to wilt, lack of sleep catching up with her.

"Put Trainee Tonks into the bedroom next to her cousin," Amelia ordered.

"Yes, boss," the Auror agreed.

"Wake her up when the children get up, feed her, and have her escorted back to the Academy," Amelia added after Tonks was out of the room.

"Got it, boss."

|||||||

Tonks hadn't been back an hour when she was yanked out of class and escorted back to the Director's office.

"Trainee Tonks reporting as ordered, Madame Bones!" Tonks called out, back ramrod straight.

"Have a seat and relax," Amelia sighed.

"Did something happen to Harry?" Tonks blurted, unable to contain herself a second longer.

"Harry's fine. I wish I could say the same about us."

"What's wrong, Madame Bones?"

"The Chief Warlock has filed a complaint against you for excessive force," Amelia explained. "I'm afraid I have to ask you a few questions."

"Yes, Madame Bones." Tonks looked lost. "Why is he doing this, I thought Dumbledore was supposed to be good?"

"It's politics," Amelia replied. "He wants Harry back with the Dursley family for some reason. He's hoping to push me into withdrawing my objections to that course of action."

"How is this going to do that?"

"The easiest way to protect you is to give in to his demands," Amelia answered bluntly. "If I choose to throw you to the wolves, he sweeps in and makes the point that 'The-Boy-Who-Lived' can't be left in the care of a disbarred and dishonored Auror."

"I understand, Madame Bones," Tonks said glumly.

"Now then, what spell did you use to soften Harry's uncle up?" Amelia asked.

"Didn't use a spell, Madame Bones."

"Oh?" Amelia perked up. "What did you use then?"

Tonks reached into the left side of her robe and pulled out a long piece of leather. "Used a sap, Madame Bones."

"Is it enchanted in anyway?" Amelia asked intently.

"Not yet, Madame Bones."

"Then we can close the investigation right now," Amelia said happily.

"Huh?"

"You used no magic whatsoever," Amelia explained. "Our use of force procedures don't cover non-magical items and techniques."

"So, Harry's safe?"

"Harry's safe," Amelia confirmed. "And I didn't know they were still teaching you to use those things at the academy, thought they'd stopped after Moody retired."

"They aren't teaching it at the academy, my granddad taught me. He was a constable till he retired a few years ago."

"What are they teaching in the close combat class then?"

"Retreat to a safe distance and try to engage in a magical duel," Tonks said unhappily. "I got extra duty for asking how to keep from getting hexed in the back during the retreat part."

"I see." It was plain to see that the woman was not happy. "It looks as if I'm going to have to take a closer interest in our training curriculum." Amelia returned her attention to Tonks. "Anything you want me to tell Harry?"

"Just that I expect him to be on his best behavior and that I'll be cross with him if he doesn't add a bit of weight this summer, Madame Bones," Tonks replied.

"I can do that," Amelia agreed. "Dismissed."

"Yes, Madame Bones! Thank you for your time, Madame Bones!" A smile on her face, Tonks marched out of the Director's office.

IIIIIIIIII

Susan and Harry were camped out in front of the fireplace waiting for their guest to arrive.

"Hannah's usually here by now," Susan said with a frown.

"The Abbot wards aren't reporting anything unusual," one of the Aurors offered. "I'll have someone sent over to make sure everything is alright if she doesn't show up soon."

"Thank you," Susan replied. "I . . ."

She broke off when a disgruntled looking Hannah tumbled through the fireplace. The poor girl was dressed in an uncomfortable looking set of formal robes and it looked as if every inch of her hair was tied up in ribbon and lace.

"Why are you dressed like that?" Susan demanded.

"My mum heard Harry was staying with you," Hannah explained. "Help me get all this off."

"How did she hear that?" one of the Aurors demanded.

"She says it's all over the Ministry," Hannah replied. "She made me get all dressed up and didn't listen when I told her Harry saw me every day at Hogwarts and I wasn't wearing all this then."

"Allow me," one of the female Aurors said, pulling out her wand. A swish, a flick, and the ribbons untied themselves, another flick and Hannah's hair was back to it's usual pony tail.

"Thank you, Auror Ross," Hannah said gratefully. "That feels so much better."

"Happy to help, kid."

"You can borrow one of my robes while you're here," Susan announced. "Come on."

"We'll be back soon, Harry," Hannah told the boy as she followed her best friend out of the room.

IIIIIIII

The Trainees stiffened to attention as Madame Bones strolled into the gym with her entourage.

"Just here to observe," Amelia said as she walked into the room. "I'm given to understand that the close combat curriculum has changed a bit from my day and I wished to see how much."

"We've dropped some of the more vulgar aspects that contaminated it in your day and made it a purely magical course," the instructor agreed proudly.

"Wonderful," Amelia said with a grin. "You don't know how happy I am to hear that the course has become more effective. How about we give the trainees a little demonstration?"

"What would you have me do, Madame Bones?"

"You be the Auror and I'll be the muggle," Amelia replied softly, so that none of the trainees could hear. "We'll show the students that magic wins over muggle methods every time."

"Uh . . ." the instructor paled, not wanting to get into a match with the Director even without magic as when he won he'd really be in for it and throwing the match would probably be even worse. "Are you sure that's a good idea, Director?"

"We've got a Healer on standby, do we not?"

"Over here, boss," Healer Rage called out.

"Then I don't see a problem," Amelia said with a smile. "Take your corner."

"Yes, boss," the instructor agreed glumly.

"Trainee Tonks, front and center!" Amelia bellowed.

"Yes, Madame Bones!" Tonks called back, double timing to the Director.

"Hold my wand," Amelia ordered. "And be good enough to let me borrow your grandfather's gift."



"Yes, Madame Bones," Tonks agreed, handing the woman her sap.

"Why don't you start us off, Rage," Amelia ordered.

"No problem, boss." Healer Rage took a deep breath. "On three. One . . . two . . . three."

Amelia darted across the room and slapped the man's wand hand, sending his stunner off in a random direction. Then, she grabbed his wrist to get more control and proceeded to beat him to a bloody pulp with Tonks' sap.

"I think it would be best to start instructing the trainees in the vulgar methods again," Amelia whispered to the instructor. "Don't you agree?"

"Yebth, Mdm Bonths," the Instructor agreed, cursing mentally how effective crass muggle methods appeared to be and glad he'd gotten off so lightly.

"Good," Amelia whispered back. "I want everyone to applaud your instructor for agreeing to give such a realistic demonstration," she said loudly as the Healer rushed over. "Can anyone tell me why we set this up?" She looked around. "Trainee Flint."

"To show how dangerous muggles can be?" the black haired woman suggested.

"One of the reasons, but not the answer I'm looking for," Amelia replied. "Anyone else? How about . . . Trainee Harper?"

"To show that we don't need our wands to be dangerous?" the man offered.

"Yes. Your wand is not what makes you dangerous, your brain and the skills we teach you here is. Never forget that when you leave here, you will be Aurors, the best the Department has to offer. Never allow yourselves to fall into the trap of thinking that because you've lost your wand you're beaten." Her voice hardened, "The bastards know that the only way to beat an Auror is to kill them, kill an Auror an

they've got the entire department gunning for them. They might beat one of us, but hell will freeze before they can take us all. Understood?"

"Understood, Madame Bones!" the class called back pride in their voices.

"Good." She glanced over at the instructor. "All patched up?"

"All patched up, Madame Bones," the man agreed.

"I'll drop in later to see how far the trainees have come. I'm sure I won't be disappointed."

"You'd better not be," he agreed, shooting a glare at the suddenly nervous trainees to cover his own worry, while mentally searching for who he knew that was trained in the old ways and could give him a hand so he could keep ahead of the recruits as he relearned it himself and not go shooting their mouth off.

"Good." She glanced back to the class. "Trainee Tonks, my wand."

"Yes, Madame Bones!" Tonks double timed to the Director and exchanged the Director's wand for her sap.

"Do me a favor and ask your grandfather if he can get a few more of these the next time you speak with him, Trainee Tonks," Amelia ordered.

"Yes, Madame Bones! I'll send him a letter today, Madame Bones!"

"Good, carry on." Amelia spun on her heel and strolled forcefully out of the room.

"Have a good time, boss?" Her aide fell into step behind her as she strode out of the room.

"Transfer the bastard they have teaching it and see if you can get Lovegood to come back," Amelia ordered as she walked down the hall.

"Uh . . . the deal Mr. Lovegood has with the Malfoy family might make that a bit tricky," the aide pointed out.

"Bring him in as a contractor and send a note to Narcissa telling her that I'd take it as a favor if Lucius didn't cause a fuss."

"Yes, boss."

"Also, slip the the Commandant that I'm going to be inviting Trainee Tonks to dine at my residence the next time he decides to let them have a pass. Stress that it is a private family matter and that I don't want her treatment to change because of it."

"Understood, boss."

"Do it myself but it might not come out right if I did it," Amelia added.

"Happy to do it for you, boss."

"Good." She continued down the hall towards the office area.

IIIIIIIIII

Susan and a much happier looking Hannah reappeared a few minutes later to rejoin Harry.

"Mum heard that you'd been kidnapped and Tonks rescued you," Hannah told Harry as she walked into the room. "And that there were ten of them and Tonks used some sort of blood magic to find you. Is any of that true?"

"I wasn't kidnapped and I gave Tonks my address before we left school," Harry said softly.

"Oh." The girl seemed to mull it over for a few moments. "Why didn't you answer any of my letters?"

"I didn't get any," Harry replied. "No one got any of mine either. It's how Tonks knew to rescue me."

"We'd better tell Hermione," Susan decided. "She's been going mad trying to figure out why you won't write to her."

"Bet Ron's frantic too," Harry agreed, receiving two disinterested shrugs in return.

|||||

"I'm demoting your close combat instructor to precision spell casting and bringing Lovegood back," Amelia announced as she stepped into the Commandant's office.

"Means I don't have to deal with the flak of cutting an incompetent pureblood loose, thank you," the Commandant replied. "Also means the field training Aurors have one less thing to worry about as he was actually skilled at that."

"Next time, tell me about these things and let me deal with it."

"Will do," he agreed.

"Speaking of that, who do you have that's competent and can be missed for a year?" Amelia asked hopefully.

"I'd rather not lose any of my competent instructors, not when I have so few of them."

"Then do your best to find a replacement for Lovegood, I'm going to do my best to get him to Hogwarts this year," she continued.

"Oh?"

"Do you remember me bragging about my Niece's ability at defense?"

"I might remember you saying a thing or two about how she was going to be the best Auror since Moody if she was able to maintain her scores," he allowed.

"All the thanks go to Trainee Tonks, none go to the Professor that was supposed to be doing the job." She'd also heard a few disturbing things regarding the man that she was going to have to look into later.

"Set up a study group?"

"Set up a detention for Harry Potter after the boy attacked a mountain troll," she replied with a grin. "He says she told him that if he was dim enough not to run, then she'd make sure he was mean enough he didn't have to. Trainee Tonks was kind enough to open that up for some of the other students."

"Including Susan."

"Including Susan," Amelia agreed. "S'why I told Dumbledore that I was going to find someone for him this year. Can't expect another student to be as diligent as our Trainee."

"Pity she doesn't have a few years under her belt, we know she's good with children and seems to be a competent teacher."

"Remind me to rotate her through here in a few years," Amelia suggested.

"Will do," he agreed, "Hogwarts after that?"

"That's the plan," Amelia replied, "subject to change."

"As always."

IIIIIIII

Hermione looked up from her book as Susan's familiar owl flew into the room and offered up her leg. After taking the letter, Hermione handed the owl a treat she'd acquired for just such occasions and then settled down to read.

"Do you mind waiting for a bit? I'd really like to send a reply back with you."

"Hoot."

"Thank you."

"Hoot."

|||||

Dobby was a frustrated house elf. Here he was, defying his bad master to protect Harry Potter and Harry Potter had disappeared. If he couldn't keep Harry from going to Hogwarts, he'd have to keep Hogwarts from taking Harry.

|||||

Harry and the girls were having lunch when a large official Ministry owl swooped in and landed on the back of Harry's chair.

"What does he want?" Hannah asked. Without saying a word, Harry handed her the letter and she in turn handed it to Susan.

"Rose," Susan called out.

"What do you need, kid?" the extremely curvy Auror Rose asked.

"Harry just got a warning for the use of underage magic," Susan said, brandishing the letter. "But he didn't, he was with us the whole time."

"Hand it over," the woman demanded. She glanced down at the letter. "I'll take care of this."

"Thank you, Rose," Susan said, her cheeks dimpling.

"Yeah, thanks, Auror Rose," Harry agreed.

|||||

Arthur did his best to cover up his nervousness as he walked into the Auror department. It was never a good thing for your boss to call you

in for a surprise meeting. It was an especially bad thing when your boss had never shown the slightest interest in your department before.

"Go right in," one of Madame Bones' aides said. "The Director is expecting you."

Arthur pasted a grin on his face and stepped unto the breach.

"Arthur," Amelia said with a smile. "Glad you could make it."

"When your boss calls, you come running," Arthur replied.

"Not when you're a department head, then you take a nice leisurely stroll to show everyone how important you are,"

"I must have missed that memo," Arthur laughed.

"Glad someone did," Amelia snorted. "Have a seat."

"What can my department do for you, Amelia?"

"It's a personal matter," Amelia replied.

"Oh?"

"Your youngest son is Harry Potter's friend and Harry is staying with me over the summer," she explained.

"I'd thought that was a rumor," he admitted. "You want to invite Ron over?"

"Or vice versa," Amelia agreed. "Just wanted to meet with you and find out what was convenient before I we set anything up."

"I'll talk to Molly."

"Good, now that business is out of the way. We can switch to pleasure. Brooks, tea!" she called out.

"Yes, boss," the aide replied.

"Any progress with your case against Malfoy?" Amelia asked, turning back to Arthur.

"All my files disappear every time I start to get anywhere," Arthur sighed. "Coincidentally, that tends to happen shortly after one of the Minister's surprise inspections."

"You didn't bring this to me why?"

"You've never shown much interest in my department before. Didn't want to put you in a position where you had to go against the Minister for us," Arthur admitted.

"The fact that you'd be the sacrificial lamb had nothing to do with it too I'd bet."

"The fact that my head would likely be on the chopping block had a lot to do with it," Arthur replied. "If it's any consolation, I was planning to dump the whole bloody mess in your lap the second I'd gotten something concrete." He paused. "The fact that I've got copies of everything that went missing and the evidence got misfiled so it never disappeared might have had something to do with it too."

"What do you mean, misfiled?" Amelia smiled.

"Tea, boss," the aide announced. The man walked in and set a cup in front of each of them and a plate of cookies in front of Arthur. "Healer Rage says you're not to have any, boss."

"Healer Rage works for me," Amelia pointed out.

"Healer Rage says it'd be better for you to cut down on your sugar, boss," the Auror replied. "Sorry, boss."

"Off with you!" Amelia barked.

"Yes, boss. Later, Arthur."



"If you ever get a chance to take the big chair, tell them no," Amelia advised. "Bastards have been treating me like I was a decrepit old crone since I took this bloody job."

"No one wants to see you go and one of the Ministers pets come in," Arthur explained.

"About the Malfoy evidence being misfiled?"

"Well, things from my department are supposed to go into evidence room 1A. Things relating to the Malfoy case tend to be misfiled somewhere a bit more secure," Arthur said slowly.

"Good work." Amelia's smile widened. "Any objections to showing me what you've got?"

"None, so long as you understand that I've only got enough to give him about three years if we're lucky. Don't want to waste Lucius' time with something like that. When I nail the bastard, I want him to have to drain his accounts to avoid the kiss. Then I want to slap him with another set of charges to get him life at least."

"At least you have realistic goals," Amelia sighed. "It's too bad that . . ." her eyes widened. "You've only got a couple years."

"Yeah?"

"I wonder what the other departments can pin on the bastard?"

"I've got a friend in the tax office that can be trusted," Arthur volunteered.

"This is going to have to be black, we can't let anyone find out about this till we're ready to make an arrest. Hell, we build a big enough case and I think I can convince Narcissa to abandon the bastard to his fate."

"She always did have a knack for moving at just the right time to avoid being spattered in Potions class," Arthur laughed.

"Remember when Molly blew up that cauldron and turned everything in the room pink?" Amelia giggled. "That was one of the more amusing accidents I remember her making."

"Uh . . . promise to keep this between us?" Arthur asked.

"I promise," Amelia agreed.

"Molly didn't have any accidents in Potions, in fact she got an O in potions on her NEWTS."

"So she?"

"Whenever she got bored or had a score to settle," Arthur agreed.

"I never would have expected that from her. She always seemed so prim and proper."

"That's just what's on the surface. Do a bit of digging and you'll find the real Molly, the one that dosed me with a love potion to get me to notice her."

"She didn't," Amelia gasped.

"I spent a week fawning over the Headmaster's gargoyle before it wore off," Arthur confessed. "It was one of those first sight ones. I went down to the table and made myself a sandwich since I was running late to a Prefect meeting. Didn't enter my system till I was in the hall and the rest is history."

IIIIIIII

Susan took the envelope off the owl's leg and opened it with her index finger.

"What's it say?" Hannah demanded.

"Hermione says that there are three letters in here, one for each of us." Susan handed the other two children their letters. "And asks

that we not forget to study since OWLs are only a couple years away."

"She says she's glad I'm okay and understands about the letters," Harry volunteered.

"She wants me to make sure that Harry's eating enough," Hannah giggled.

"Mine's full of questions about Tonks," Susan finished things off. "And she also wants to know if it would be okay to visit."

IIIIIIII

Amelia glanced up as one of her aides slipped into the room.

"Visitor for you, boss."

"Who?"

"Andromeda Tonks," the Aide replied. "She's not looking very happy, boss."

"Send her in," Amelia ordered.

The former Auror stormed into the office. "Amelia," the woman said tightly.

"Andromeda. What seems to be the trouble?"

"I'd like your permission to go into the Academy and make my daughter's life a living hell," the woman replied.

"Have a seat." Amelia gestured towards the chair. "And tell me what prompted this desire of yours."

"Do you know why she didn't contact us after she took in Harry Potter?" Andromeda demanded. "I'm her mother for god's sake, she should have come to me."

"As I understand it, she would have, but she didn't have your contact information."

Tonks' mother sighed and most of the tension seemed to leave her frame. "That girl . . . do you know who's taking care of the boy right now?"

"He's staying with me at the moment."

"At least she did something right. Do you mind if I drop by and visit him some time?" Andromeda asked hopefully.

"Not at all."

"Thank you, Amelia. You've put my mind at ease. When I heard my daughter had taken in a child I was . . . I suppose it doesn't matter."

"She also told me you two had an argument," Amelia prompted.

"She's dead set on becoming an Auror, I'm dead set against it. It's natural that the two of us should butt heads over that."

"Any reason why you're so against her career choice? I'd think you of all people would understand it."

"You've seen what happened to her father, her godmother, her godmother's partner, to the Longbottoms, and what almost happened to me," Andromeda replied. "Why in the hell would you think I want my little girl to follow in our footsteps?"

"Point."

"How is she doing?" Andromeda asked, a hint of eagerness in her eyes.

"Top of her class by a considerable margin. Commandant says he's planning to make her the Trainee-Captain at the end of the rotation."

"It's to be expected from my daughter," Andromeda stated, unable to keep the pride out of her voice.

"It's also why I'm not going to let you go down to the Academy to cause trouble," Amelia continued. "I'd hate for her to lose a pass."

"Oh?"

"She spends every spare moment she can get with Harry, the two have grown quite attached to each other."

"I'd still like to get a look at my daughter now that I'm back," Andromeda said.

"I'd like you to give a couple talks at the Academy," Amelia countered. "I'm sure we could find a way for both of us to get what we want."

"Happy to help, Amelia. Any time, you know that."

"Mind if I open that up to my people and a few family members?"

"Anyone you want. Just let me have a bit of time with my little girl afterwards."

"So long as you promise not to cause any trouble," Amelia agreed.

"I'll wait till after she graduates before I try to push her into something Auror related but safer," Andromeda promised. "Forensics is usually pretty safe. When you said family members?"

"Some of the Aurors have children they'd like to bring along. I've got at least three that I'm going to bring with me."

"I see."

"How's your husband?"

"Better. We usually get a week or two between fits and he usually recovers in less than an hour."

"Healers still have no clue on how to repair the spell damage?" Amelia asked sympathetically.

"Healers still aren't sure what combination of spells were used," Andromeda replied, "good luck getting it out of the casters, they weren't in any shape to answer questions or do anything else after I was done with 'em."

|||||

The Grangers looked up as their receptionist stumbled into the room with a look of dumb shock on her face. The woman opened and closed her mouth a couple times, unable to think of how to begin the conversation.

"What is it?" Hermione's mother asked.

"Couple coppers here to see you," the woman stuttered. "They say they're from the special branch."

"Did they say what they wanted?"

"No," the trembling woman replied.

"Ask them if they want any tea and send them in," Hermione's father ordered.

"Yes, sir."

Two humorless looking men in dark suits tromped in and carefully closed the door behind them.

"What's this about?" Hermione's mother demanded.

"We're here regarding your daughter, Hermione, Mrs. Granger," the man on the left replied.

"What's happened to her?" she demanded.

"Nothing, Mrs. Granger. We're here on behalf of Madame Bones to take care of a personal matter."

"Madame Bones is the Director of Magical Law Enforcement," the man on the right explained. "Think of her as a combination of the Home Secretary and the Lord Chancellor."

"What's she want with our daughter?" Hermione's father asked.

"Your daughter is one of her niece Susan's friends," the man on the left replied. "Madame Bones would like to invite her to visit this summer."

"Oh . . . I don't think there will be any problem with that," Hermione's father agreed. "Any reason she didn't come herself?"

"Because she's currently in a surprise meeting the Minister called to show everyone how important he is," the man on the right said. "She sends her regrets and asked us to mention that there is going to be a lecture at the Auror Academy, you and your daughter are invited."

"When is it?"

"This weekend. Madame Bones regrets that she gave you so little notice, but this was a last minute thing and she did not have any advanced notice herself."

"We'll go," Hermione's mother agreed, both parents were eager to get a look at the magical world that had so captivated their little girl. "How will we get there?"

"A car will be sent to pick you up, Mr. Granger, Mrs. Granger.."

IIIIIIII

Tonks marched into the commandant's office, doing her best to hide her nervousness. It was never good for a cadet to attract the attention of any of their superiors, she'd risen to the notice of them all. It was an uncomfortable place to find herself.

"Trainee Tonks reporting as ordered, sir!" Tonks said; chin up, shoulders back, and chest out.

"Madame Bones has been kind enough to invite you to dine at her house," the Commandant informed the girl. "I am only going to tell you this once. I don't care about your personal relationship with the Director, if you do anything to shame the academy you will think that I raised hell from the depths of the earth just to punish you. Clear?"

"Clear, sir!"

"Good, conversely, if you make the academy look good, I'll be happy. If I'm happy, I'm not spending every spare moment thinking of ways to make you unhappy, which as the Commandant of the academy is not only my duty, but one of my fondest pastimes. Madame Bones is likely to ask you about the academy, you will answer her questions truthfully and completely. If Madame Bones asks your opinion of me, you will give your honest opinion of me. I don't care if you think I'm a bastard because it is my job to be a bastard, I do however care if you lie to the Director. Clear?"

"Clear, sir!"

"Good, give your cousin my best."

"I will, sir!"

"One of Madame Bones' aids is waiting outside with a portkey, dismissed."

Tonks did an about face and marched out of the Commandant's office. There were two of Madame Bones' aides waiting for her outside.

"The boss wanted us to tell you that you're meeting your mother after dinner," one of the aides said.

"We wanted to tell you how displeased she'll be if you cause a scene," the other aide finished.

"I'll stay professional, Auror."



"Never thought you wouldn't but it had to be said. Touch the rainbow," he instructed, holding out a cheap plastic toy.

"Tonks!" Immediately upon arrival she was attacked by three screaming children.

"I missed you guys too," Tonks laughed, pulling Harry into a hug. "Especially you, Harry. How do you like living with the Boneses?"

"It's great," Harry replied cheerfully. "How do you like the Academy?"

"Can't wait to get out and into the real world. Before I forget, the Commandant sends his best. I think he's trying to give you a positive image so you try out for Auror after you graduate," Tonks replied.

"Oh. Tell him thank you."

"Aunt Amelia says that there's always room for Aurors that are willing to attack a Troll without knowing any magic," Susan offered.

"Speaking of magic." Tonks smirked. "I hear you got dinged with an underage complaint?"

"They thought I was still at the Dursleys when I was here," Harry explained. "Auror Rose said not to worry about it."

"Even when I put you in the Director of Magical Law Enforcement's heavily warded house under twenty four hour guard, you still find a way to cause trouble." Tonks shook her head in mock exasperation.

"There's no hope for Harry," Susan agreed.

"That's why he needs you to look after him," Hannah added.

"Then I'm appointing the two of you to do it in my place when I'm not around," Tonks said with a smile.

"Only two?" Hannah gasped.

"I don't think we can handle it alone," Susan agreed.

"There's Hermione, she's always up for trying to keep Harry out of trouble."

"Why don't you three tell me about your day?" Tonks suggested, derailing the conversation before the boy had a chance to become annoyed as she gave Harry another affectionate squeeze. The boy had lived his entire life without love, she was determined that he'd never be without it again.

Tonks sat down and listened to the children talk about their day and all the adventures they'd had.

"Sounds like you had a lot of fun," Tonks said as the story wound down. "But I didn't hear anything about doing any homework."

"Now you sound just like Hermione," Hannah accused.

"Just be sure not to leave it till the last minute," Tonks advised.

"Indeed," Amelia said as she walked into the room.

"Director!" Tonks said, leaping to her feet.

"Sit," Amelia ordered. "And none of that while we're off duty."

"Yes, Madame Bones."

"Come along, children, it's time to eat."

The three children jumped up and dashed out of the room.

"Not you, Trainee Tonks," Amelia said, freezing the girl in her tracks.

"Yes, Madame Bones?"

"I invited your mother over for an after dinner chat," Amelia said neutrally.

"Your aide told me, Madame Bones."

"Is there going to be any trouble?"

"No, Madame Bones. Not from me anyway."

"Good." Amelia sighed. "Why do you think your mother objects to your career?"

"I don't know, Madame Bones," Tonks replied. "I know that she and da were Aurors. But mum says it was a war and times were different and that it's not an occupation for a proper young lady."

"Any idea of what she expects you to do?"

"I think she expects me to run off with some bloke she hates to have a barely legitimate daughter," Tonks replied sourly. "Judging from her example anyway."

"Barely legitimate?" Amelia asked dryly.

"Born a week and a half after the wedding," Tonks explained with a grin.

"I'd forgotten that," Amelia admitted. "Let's just say that your mother has shared your reasons with me and I understand them. She has also agreed to let the matter drop until after you leave the Academy."

"Understood, Madame Bones. Thank you, Madame Bones."

"Good. Now let's get to the table before the children starve to death."

"Yes, Madame Bones." Tonks followed her superior into the dining room

Amelia watched amused as Tonks took her place next to Harry and doubled the boy's portions.

"You need to eat more," Tonks admonished.

"What do you think of the new close combat instructor, Trainee Tonks?" Amelia asked, trying to hide her amusement.

"Mr. Lovegood is great!" Tonks enthused. "I never knew there were so many ways to injure a man's privates."

"He was an amazing Auror till he got hit by the wrong spell," Amelia agreed. "Did something to his mind, made him a bit . . . loopy, for lack of a better term." She turned to Harry. "He was also your mother's partner till she had to take leave to have you."

"Mum was an Auror?" Harry asked in surprise.

"One of the best, they called her The Bleeding Lily. You didn't know?" Amelia's eyebrows raised.

"No," Harry agreed.

"Be good enough to ask Mr. Lovegood to contact me when you see him tomorrow, Tonks," Amelia ordered.

"Yes, Madame Bones."

Amelia turned back to Harry. "We'll see if we can't get him over here to tell you about your mother, okay, Harry?"

"Thank you, Amelia," Harry said with a smile.

IIIIIIIIII

The cadets glanced up as the Trainee-Sergeant walked into the barracks.

"What's up?" one of them asked.

"One of the instructors just slipped me the word that we're going to get some big-wig visitor to give us a talk. Suggested that it might be a good idea to be ready for an inspection."

"Good to know," the other trainee agreed.

"Ipswitch," the Trainee-Sergeant said. "Take Smith and get everything polished."

"No problem."

"Cooper, I want you and Red to clean the latrine."

"It's Tonks' turn to clean the bloody thing, get her to do it," Cooper complained.

"Tonks is at the Director's house again," the Trainee-Sergeant replied. "That's why I'm telling you to clean it."

"What makes her so special, just because she rescued 'The-Boy-Who-Lived' shouldn't mean . . ." Cooper grumbled.

"Belay that!" the Trainee-Sergeant barked.

"Director is only inviting her over so she can spend time with Harry Potter," one of the other trainees interjected. "My younger sister's at Hogwarts and she tells me that Tonks really loves that kid."

"I heard they were cousins through the Blacks," another offered.

"There you have it," the Trainee-Sergeant agreed. "You rescue your cousin from a bunch of muggles and have them live at the Director's house, we'll see what happens, until then shut it or I'll shut it for you."

IIIIIIII

Andromeda and Tonks stared at each other for a few moments before one of them chose to break the silence.

"Nymphadora, I hear that you threw the contact information I gave you into a fire."

"I did, mum," Tonks agreed.

"Try to avoid that sort of behavior in the future," Andromeda advised. "A good Auror always knows how to get in touch with someone useful."

"Okay, mum," Tonks agreed with a happy smile.

"Now then." Andromeda looked around till her eyes settled on Harry. "Why don't you introduce me to your charge."

"Harry." Tonks took the boy's hand. "This is my mum, Andromeda. Mum, you've met Harry, haven't you?"

"Many years ago," she agreed. "Hello, Harry."

"Hello, Ms. Tonks," Harry replied.

"I'm very glad my daughter rescued you, Harry. And I am very sorry I didn't think to do it myself. We all believed Dumbledore when he told us you were safe." She turned back to her daughter. "That's another mistake I expect you to avoid, a good Auror always checks and double checks their information."

"Got it, mum." Tonks was glowing.

"Good. Amelia tells me you're at the top of your class, I expect you to stay there. Understood?"

"I'll do my best to be the best, mum."

"You'd better, I did not raise you to be average." The woman settled down. "Now why don't the two of you tell me exactly what happened? I've heard the rumors, I've seen the reports, now I want the truth."

|||||

Hermione was just revising her homework when she heard her parents get home.

"Come down for a moment please, darling," her mother called out.

"Coming, mum," Hermione agreed. She carefully put down her quill and rushed down the stairs.

"Your friend Susan's Aunt has invited you to spend some time with them over the summer," she explained. "Is that something you'd like to do?"

"I'd love to visit Susan," Hermione agreed, looking delighted by the notion.

"Good, we're also going to be going to their Police Academy to hear someone speak. Susan should be there too."

"Really?" Hermione squeaked. "I wonder if Harry and Hannah will be there?"

IIIIIIII

Andromeda watched her daughter demonstrate the moves she'd learned in her unarmed combat classes for a few moments before she decided to act.

"You're putting too much weight on your back foot, Nymphadora," Andromeda chided. She walked up and adjusted her daughter's stance. "Do you see?"

"No, mum."

"Amelia tells me that they've brought in Lovegood to fix your previous instructor's mistakes. How many classes have you had with him?"

"Four, mum."

"I guess your stance is acceptable if you've only had four lessons," she allowed. "He still offer to take on all comers?"

"Yes, mum. But no one is daft enough to agree to be his training dummy. Not after the first day anyway."

"I see." Amelia's grin deepened. "I want you to volunteer tomorrow."

"Mum?"

"I am going to show you something. If you are a quick learner, it may surprise him enough that he doesn't stomp you into the ground." Andromeda smiled.

"Okay, mum," Tonks agreed happily. Tonks eyes widened. "Damn it."

"Language," Andromeda chided. "What is it?"

"I forgot to tell Madame Bones that grandpa replied to my letter. He knows a guy that can supply as many saps as I need."

"We'll tell her when we're done practicing here," Andromeda promised. "Now, the first thing I want you to do is . . ."

|||||||

Everyone was at the table when Tonks and her mother returned and took their seats.

"Don't forget to tell her, Nymphadora," Andromeda prompted.

"Got a letter from my granda, Madame Bones, says he's got a guy who can get you as many saps as you want," Tonks reported.

"Know anything about this guy?" Amelia asked.

"S'one of my grandfather's friends, Madame Bones," Tonks replied. "Another retired copper, granda says his friend can make as many saps as you want."

"Can he also teach a couple of ours how to make them?"

"He could," Andromeda interjected. "He taught my husband before shaky hands made fine work impossible."



"Wonderful," Amelia replied with a grin. She turned towards the children. "You lot wanna learn something useful?" She grinned at the enthusiastic response.

|||||||

Lovegood strutted into the gym for his morning class, every fiber of his being showing that he knew himself to be the most dangerous son of a bitch in the room.

"Anyone feel up for a bit of sport this morning?" the unarmed combat instructor asked. "Broken bone means a day off and a meal at St. Mungo's. Deal like that, I'd have given anything for when I was one of you."

"I'd like to challenge you, Mr. Lovegood," Tonks volunteered.

"Wonderful, good to see that one of our new Aurors has a bit of spirit. Take your place, Trainee Tonks."

"I'm to tell you that Madame Bones would like a word, Mr. Lovegood," Tonks said as she took her mark. "Thought it best to do that while I still had a working jaw."

"Thank you. Ready to begin?"

"Yes, Mr. Lovegood."

"Whenever you are ready." He decided to let the girl make her move, it'd be interesting to see what her plan was.

Tonks moved in close, drove the side of her shoe into the man's shin and scraped it down to stomp on the bridge of his foot.

"Hold up a second, Ms. Tonks," Lovegood ordered. He raised his voice, "Ms. Tonks has just demonstrated a rather dirty move. One I believe has broken my tarsea lateralis." He waved at Healer Rage to keep her seat.

"I'm sorry Mr. Lovegood, I . . ."

"Why?" he interrupted. "I was your opponent and you've made it difficult for me to continue. Learn that move from your mother or from your father?"

"From my mother, Mr. Lovegood."

"It was a favorite of your godmother's, too," he reminisced. "She used add an elbow to the face when she did it though."

"My godmother?"

"You didn't know?"

"I didn't know I had a godmother, Mr. Lovegood."

"Your godmother was Lily Potter, my partner." He sighed. "Shame what happened." Greater shame that the war had ended before he'd had a chance to get more than a bit of unofficial revenge. "Shall we continue?"

"Don't you want to get your foot taken care of first, Mr. Lovegood?"

"Would I be able to do that in an actual fight?"

"No, Mr. Lovegood."

"No point in doing it here, now is it?"

"I suppose not, Mr. Lovegood."

"Begin." He batted the girl's fist aside and twisted her arm behind her back until the joints began to separate. "Good punch, your follow up needs work. Try to avoid letting yourself get predictable in the future. Does anyone else wish to try their luck?" He looked around the room, there were no takers. "Not even with me having a broken bone in my foot? Pity," he sighed. "We're going to be working on joint locks today. Healer Rage, if you would be so good as to heal up my foot before we begin?"

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The small Granger family was waiting when the Ministry car pulled up to the curb.

"Madame Bones' compliments," the dark suited driver announced as he opened the door. "Please feel free enjoy as many of the refreshments as you like."

"Thank you," Hermione's father said as he ushered his girls into the back.

None of them said much during the ride to the Auror Academy, they were all too busy staring out the windows at the world as it blurred by.

"We're here," the driver announced as the car pulled to a halt in a large parking garage. He got out of the car and opened the door for them. "I will be waiting for you at the end of the presentation."

"Hermione!" a girlish squeal echoed through the structure.

"Susan!" Hermione squealed back. The two girls embraced.  
"Hannah!"

"Hermione!" the girl cheered, turning the two way hug into a three way.

"Where's Harry?" Hermione demanded.

"With Tonks," Susan replied. "Commandant of the Academy is letting him spend the day with her."

"We'll be able to see them after the presentation," Hannah added.  
"Do you know who's doing it?"

"Tonks' mum," Susan answered.

"Will we get to meet her too?" Hermione asked.

"She was at the house last night, so probably," Susan agreed.

"We'd better hurry if we want to get there in time," Hermione's mother prompted.

"Right." Hermione blushed. "Mum, dad, this is Susan and Hannah, two of my best friends."

"A pleasure to meet you two," Hermione's mother replied. "Now let's be going."

The two girls led the way to a large auditorium and to their seats at the front of the room.

"This is my Aunt Amelia," Susan announced. "Aunty, this is Hermione and her mum and dad."

"Charmed," Amelia replied. "I . . . looks like we'll have to cut the introductions short, it's starting."

The lights in the auditorium darkened as the lights on the stage brightened. A serious looking woman walked up to the podium and tapped her wand.

"You know me, my name is Andromeda Black. I was an Auror during the first rise as was my husband. Since then I've devoted my life to the scientific study of crime solving and Auror methods. I'm here today to share some of my findings with you."

The woman tapped her wand again and the lights on the stage dimmed to be replaced by a large projected image.

"The first thing we're going to look at today is body language." Andromeda clicked her first slide which was of a young couple at a cafe. "What can we tell from this picture?" There were no replies. "We can tell that she is attracted to her date. Look at the way she keeps touching her mouth and her hair, the way she licks her lips, the way she arches her back and leans forward, the way she moves her feet apart. All signs that she finds him attractive. As Aurors, you can not just listen to a person's words. It's easy to lie with words, it's more difficult to change your unconscious actions." She clicked a slide,

showing a man sitting in a chair. "Look at this picture, look at the way his eyes move, the way he can't stay still, the way his foot keeps tapping."

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Tonks was waiting for her mother when the woman came down from the stage to interact with the crowd.

"What can I do for you, Nymphadora?" Andromeda asked upon seeing the hopeful look on her daughter's face.

"Could I get a copy of your book, mum?" Tonks asked hopefully.

"Of course," Andromeda agreed. "Will they let you keep it at the academy?"

"They're issuing one to each of us and we're being tested on it in a week. I suppose I've got an advantage since I helped you edit it," Tonks replied with a grin. "It's one of the things that made me want to be an Auror."

"Why do you need another?"

"For Hermione, uh, she's one of Harry's friends," Tonks replied. "She was also absolutely fascinated by your lecture."

"Glad to hear it, how did the other children take it?"

"They liked it too, but they're not quite so obsessed with books as Hermione is," Tonks replied.

"So she's a mini-Narcissa." Andromeda laughed.

"Aunt Narcissa likes books?"

"Adores them. Give her something rare if you ever need to get on her good side. Go to a muggle bookstore and get everything new they have if you can't find or afford something rare."

"Aunt Narcissa likes muggle books?" Tonks squeaked.

"She likes all books," Andromeda corrected. "Heaven to her would be the chance to become a librarian."

"Does she have a copy of your book?"

"Assuming she kept the one I sent her," Andromeda agreed. "Just because we ended up on different sides, doesn't mean we aren't still sisters. And yes, that applies to your Aunt Bellatrix also." The woman pursed her lips. "Enough of that, why don't you introduce me to the little bibliophile."

"She's right this way, mum." Tonks led her mother through the crowd to the bubble of peace around the Director. "She's the one with the brown hair," Tonks whispered.

"I'd assumed. She's also the only one of the children I haven't been introduced to. The muggle couple her parents?"

"Yes, mum."

"Wonderful, introduce us please, Nymphadora," Andromeda ordered.

"Yes, mum." Tonks took a couple steps forward and pasted a smile on her face. "Hermione, Mr. Granger, Mrs. Granger. I'd like to introduce you to my mum."

"A pleasure to meet you," Mr. Granger said with a grin. "Fascinating topic."

"Have you given any thought to the study of forensic dentistry?" Mrs. Granger asked.

"I have, and would dearly love a chance to speak with you about it later," Andromeda replied. She produced a business card. "The number goes to my answering service, please tell me when you have the time for a long meeting."

"We will," Mrs. Granger agreed.

"Good, I'm afraid I've been looking for someone who would allow me to pick their brain on the subject," Andromeda continued.

"We don't mind so long as we can pick your brain about the magical world," Mr. Granger replied with a laugh.

"Deal," Andromeda said. "Hermione?"

"Yes, Mrs. Tonks?" Hermione asked.

"My daughter tells me that you would like a copy of my book." The woman reached into her pocket and pulled out a book. "Here you are, signed and everything."

"Thank you, Mrs. Tonks."

"I'll thank you to send me a list of any questions you have," Andromeda laughed. "I'm trying to write a set and that one is supposed to be the understandable one to someone without a background in Law Enforcement. I'll get more out of answering your questions than any other form of criticism I can think of."

"I will," Hermione promised, eyes gleaming at the thought of being part of the writing process.

"Amelia, Andromeda!" a masculine voice called out.

"Odd!" Andromeda called back with a grin. "How are you?"

Mr. Lovegood walked up with a small blonde girl in tow. "Wonderful, though I understand I have you to thank for a broken foot."

"Really?" Andromeda shot her daughter a proud look.

"And two more cracked," he agreed cheerfully. "Have you met my daughter, Luna?"

AN: Had intended to write more of this before posting it, but I ran out of time. Don't be surprised to see another part at some point.

Polish by dogbertcarroll

Ideas by: polychromeknight, Drake

Typos by: Tommy King, Dark King, NuitTombee

Omake: Meeting with the Dursleys

Tonks glared across the table at the Dursleys. "You ever lay a finger on Harry, you ever even come near him again and I'll beat you to death."

"You can't just . . ." the Solicitor blustered.

"Shut up," Tonks interrupted. She turned back to Vernon and fixed him with a glare that would have done her boss proud. "You hear me, you fat tub of lard?"

"I . . . we hear you," Vernon squeaked.

"Good." Tonks rose from her seat and stormed out of the room.

"Fair warning," Tonks' Solicitor leaned towards his colleague so he could whisper, "She's been recruited directly into the special branch. Her parents were in the special branch. Her father got a medical retirement from injuries received in the line of duty, her mother writes books about how to be a better copper. Her grandfather was a copper, her great-grandfather was a copper, her great-great-grandfather was a copper and the boy your client is accused of abusing is the son of another special branch copper. People worry about crossing organized crime, but crossing organized law is much worse."

"Shit." The other Solicitor turned deathly pale. "Thank you."

Omake: Luna's Sorting

'Hufflepuff, please,' Luna thought to the hat. "If I can't go there, I suppose Gryffindor would be okay too."



'Why those houses?'

'That's where my friends are,' Luna explained.

'Heh, I guess that's as good a reason as any to put you into,' the Sorting Hat's opened its mouth to say, "Hufflepuff!"

"We saved you a seat, Luna!" Susan called out.

Omake: The Shape of Things to Come?

"How's your Patronus?" Amelia asked as the young Auror walked into her office.

"Could be better," Tonks admitted. "What's up, boss?"

"Your cousin was attacked by Dementors," Amelia said gently.

"What . . . but . . . I just put him on the train," the Auror looked lost. "Is he?"

"He's fine," Amelia assured the younger woman. "Just a little shook up."

Tonks let out the breath she'd been holding. "Permission to get a few hours to visit him?"

"Denied," Amelia replied. "New assignment."

"Yes, boss," Tonks said with a look of disappointment on her face.

"Cheer up, you'll like this one." Amelia slid a file across her desk. "It is the position of the Minister that Dementors are the best and most cost effective way of securing Hogwarts from Sirius Black, it's my position that a team of Aurors would work better. We compromised by agreeing to send a liaison from my office to coordinate things."

"Yes, boss," Tonks agreed happily.

"Officially that's all you're going to do, unofficially I want you there to keep the children safe from Fudge's folly and to keep an eye on that cousin of yours."

"Sure, bet he's at the center of whatever's happening," Tonks agreed. "Happy to be of service, boss."

|||||||

"You move, you die," Tonks growled at the escaped convict. She grunted in pain as someone hit her in the side with a piercing hex and suddenly the convict was a large dog bounding past her. The room seemed to spin as Tonks fell to the ground. She felt weak, barely able to lift her wand to deal with her attacker. She allowed her a brief moment of satisfaction at seeing the dog clamping down on her attacker's wand arm before ending the man with a spell.

"Tonks!" Harry cried, rushing to his cousin's side.

"Weasley, get McGonagall. Everyone else get out!" the Auror ordered. "Out and lock the door behind you." She shifted her attention back to the dog as it shifted back into a man. "My earlier threat stands," she choked. "Make one move and you die."

Harry was pressing his hands into her side, doing everything he could to stop the flow of blood.

"I told you to get out, Harry," Tonks coughed, her lips covered in pink froth.

"I'm not leaving you!" Harry sobbed. "Just stay awake, everything will be okay."

"Use a loose grip and make a small semi circle with the tip of your wand in the direction of the wound, the incantation is coagulare. It should stop the bleeding," the filthy man advised.

"If this hurts her . . ."

"It won't matter if you don't do it quickly," the man interrupted. "She's loosing a lot of blood."

"Damn it," Harry sobbed. "Coagulare." To the boy's relief, the spell seemed to work.

"Now, I want you to wave your wand over the wound from left to right slowly, try to move only the tip. The incantation is diagignoskein."

Harry followed the instructions and the wound turned a sickly black. "What did you make me do to her?" he accused.

"Damn it." In a flash the man was by his side and had taken possession of Harry's wand. "Try to make her comfortable," he ordered. "Put something under her head."

Harry watched in shock as Tonks' wounds began knitting themselves closed. "What are you doing?"

"Trying to save her life," the man replied.

The door burst open to reveal the Head of Gryffindor house, wand in hand. "Step away from her, Mr. Black!"

"She's been hit by a level three curse, I'm the only thing keeping her alive right now," the man replied. "I'll step back when a competent Healer gets here."

"I would advise you to avoid making any sudden moves," McGonagall said coldly. "Come to me, Mr. Potter and be careful not to get between me and our guest."

"Do what she says," Mr. Black advised. "Damn it. Send one of your students to get . . . never mind." The man sagged in relief. "I'm going to give Harry back his wand with the understanding that I can take it back if she starts to crash again."

"Slowly," Minerva ordered.

The man handed Harry his wand back and leaned in to take a deep whiff of the wound. "No smell of decay," he reported. "I think I've removed it, but that's for the professional Healers to decide."

"Poppy's right behind me," Flitwick announced. "Mr. Black, you're looking as well as to be expected. If you try anything, I will be forced to do something very uncomfortable to you."

"What's going on?" Poppy demanded.

"Level three necromatic with some sort of anti coagulation. I think I've broken the curse and stabilized her," Sirius reported. "I did what I could, Madame Pomfrey, I think it was enough."

"Move!" Poppy barked, she shoved the man out of the way and got to work. "I still want to see her in St. Mungos but I think you've saved her life. Good work, Mr. Black. The question I want to ask now is, why?"

"I've only wanted to hurt two people in my life; Snape and Peter. She took care of Peter and was guarding Harry, I owe her and even if I didn't, my oath says that I'm to save lives."

Poppy glanced at the corpse. "There's a story here, I look forward to hearing it."

"As do I," Amelia agreed as she swept into the room. "Secure the body and place Black under guard."

"Yes, Boss," one of her bodyguards agreed. "Give me no trouble, you'll get no trouble."

"I'll be good," Sirius agreed. "You're looking well, Amelia."

"You're looking like shit, Black," Amelia replied. "You saved my Auror's life, that gives you a certain amount of leeway."

"She was protecting Harry," Sirius replied. "Couldn't let her die, not after seeing how devoted she and the boy were to each other."

"They're cousins," Amelia explained, watching his face.

"Cousins?" Sirius frowned in confusion. "He doesn't . . . this can't be . . . Nymphadora? But she's just a . . ." the man looked lost. "What's my baby cousin doing as an Auror?"

"Erasing the stain you left on the family. Though, from the sound of things, she may have to find a new reason."

"There's always Bellatrix and my brother," Sirius suggested, his eyes fixed on the fallen Auror. "No shortage of Blacks to choose from."

"True."

|||||

"Almost everyone was getting involved in the war in some way after we graduated," Sirius replied. "Your mum became an Auror for example. I couldn't stomach the idea of having to hex a relative no matter what they'd done so I joined one of the fire brigades doing search and rescue. We'd arrive, rip down the wards, and rescue as many people as we could. Things got so bad they gave us a crash course in combat medicine and it's lucky they did or I'd have never been able to save Nymphy's life."

"She hates it when you call her that, you know," Harry stated.

"She owes me for all the diapers I changed," Sirius retorted. "She changes a few of mine and we can talk about it."

|||||

"What do I think about Black being found innocent?" the old wizard repeated. "I think it's about bloody time."

"So you never thought he was guilty?" the reporter persisted.

"I should have never thought it," the old man corrected. "Let me tell you how I met Sirius Black. My house was under attack by Death Eaters and we were lucky enough to have the Aurors arrive before

the wards shattered. That's when a crazy bastard ran through the spellfire and into my house. Soon as he arrives, the guy turns to me and tells me that I may not have noticed but the house was on fire, throws up a quick ward to keep us from burning, suffocating, or being crushed to death. And then he asks me if anyone was hurt. My youngest and my wife had both been hit." The old man closed his eyes. "He was able to save my wife. It's cause of that I should have realized about his confession."

"Because he was able to save your wife?"

"Because he couldn't stop apologizing about my youngest. Said if he'd been a bit faster, maybe. Healers tell me Black did everything possible and that a couple minutes either way wouldn't have mattered a bit. Told him that too but it didn't stop him from tearing himself apart over it. Same thing musta happened with the Potters, Black thinks that if he'd ha' been a bit faster, they'd be alive."

"He's blaming himself for not being Dumbledore?" the reporter suggested, eyes lighting in understanding.

"Dumbledore? Ha!. He's blaming himself for not being bloody, Merlin!"

IIIIIIII

Sirius gave the old CB750 an affectionate caress.

"Had Dumbledore put up a couple stasis charms to keep 'er pretty," Hagrid said. "Figgered the bike 'adent done no wrong even if you did. Was plannin to give 'er to Harry aftr 'e got outta Hogwarts."

"Thank you, Hagrid," Sirius said thickly.

AN: Seen a lot of fics where Sirius was an Auror, don't believe I've seen any that had him as a member of a Fire Brigade.

Polish by dogbertcarroll

Typo by: Dark King

Idea by: Wolfman

Omake by: polychromeknight

Harry was sitting on his new bed, wondering how many chores he'd have to do to in a big, old house like this, when a blonde missile ran in the door and pounced on his bed, sending him sailing six inches into the air before he found himself wrapped in Hufflepuff.

"Huh?" he managed intelligently.

"Well, my breasts aren't any bigger," Susan answered, hugging him energetically, "and I couldn't find the pony. But when Auntie said that she'd gotten me Harry Potter for my birthday I knew that I had to be dreaming. So I figured I'd enjoy it while it lasted. Now, are you going to read me poetry, or should we go straight to the kissing?"

"I don't know any poetry," Harry said, wondering if he was still asleep.

"I was hoping you'd say that," she said with a grin.

'Thank Merlin for evidence cameras' Amelia thought to herself, snapping her second shot, standing disillusioned in the doorway so as not to disturb the cuteness going on inside the room.

IIIIIIII

For the second time in as many days Harry found himself bounced six inches into the air as a blonde missile pounced on the center of his bed.

Odd. Susan hadn't stopped turning red since the \*last\* time.

"Su... you're not Susan!" he declared in shock.

"I know. But why should she get to have all of the fun?" The blonde witch cuddling into the center of his chest was undisturbed by his revelation.

AN: Sorry. Just had a thought about Lovegood visiting... and bringing his daughter along.

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Omake by Alex Mcpherson

omake: a mouthful of Malfoy.

Dobby went to Great Harry Potters house. Dobby not find him only rude dursleys. Dobby Must Find Harry Potter, Dobby must Protect Harry Potter, greatest of wizards. Dobby listened for next few days. Dobby hears Harry Potter sir in Boneses House. Dobby goes to boneses House and finds Harry Potter.

"Harry Potter must not go to Hogwarts! Terrible things are going to happen!"

"Oh?" Came the voice of old lady. Dobby not know who she was. Master didn't let doobby know much about who's who. Other elves tell Dobby about Great Harry Potter sir, though.

"Yes, Terrible things."

"And what are these, terrible things?"

"Dobby cannot say, mistress. Dobby shouldn't be here, Dobby's master not know."

Suddenly, another house elf arrived. Dobby recognized from the House Elf Underground Fighting club. "Peachy?"

Pechy looked at doobby. Peachy then looked at Mistress, and told Mistress, "This is Dobby, he's one of Mister Malfoy's house elves."

Dobby didn't know what happened. things went fast. Master was arrested, Dobby freed, by what doobby not understand. special sock, lots magic on it. Sock belongs to ministry. Dobby askeded to be Great Harry Potter's house elf.



Days later, Dobby hearded from other elveses that former bad master in azaban, for owning a whorey-crutch. Ministry started search for shade. Dobby dont' know why they look for cover from sun.

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Omake by Silas Dunsmore

Trainee... Tonks! Front and Center!

Sir?

Trainee Tonks! It appears you are in a spot of trouble! The Chief Warlock of the Wizengamot himself has laid a formal complaint against you! You are ordered to immediately report to the Commandant's office, trainee Tonks!

What am I hearing, trainee Tonks? I am not hearing a response! You have just been given an order, trainee Tonks! What do you say?

Sir, yes sir!

Off with you, then!

{Tonks moves toward the nearest floo point, etc.}

Trainee Tonks! Halt, about face! Atten-hut!

Take note, trainee Tonks! The Chief Warlock of the Wizengamot cannot decide your fate! Nor can the Supreme Mugwump! Nor even the Headmaster of the school of Hogwarts!

Only Commandant Madam Bones will decide your fate! And I do believe she likes you. So... chin up and face your fate bravely, trainee Tonks! Trainee... Tonks, carry out your orders!

Now, you lot have grown fat and slovenly! I can see those chocolate stains! A little light exercise should do the trick. Platoon... left.. turn! Your other left, Robard! Now advance! Advance! And... qui...ck

march! Double... march! What a wonderful day this is. No clouds at all. Aren't you enjoying the sunshine, trainee Cutler? Move it, Jenkins!

Omake by Tumshie1960

"Harry, I've noticed you're having trouble aiming some of your spells, I think you need an eye-test," Tonks noted as she watched the friends shoot water at each other in a mock duel.

Harry quickly agreed, and a few days later was the proud owner of a new pair of glasses, and with some upgrades. If he touched the left leg once they turned into a pair of mirror lensed aviator style shades, the girls all agreed they were very cool.

Over the Summer what had started as bored Aurors on guard duty at the Bones' home teaching the friends some dueling and fighting techniques, had rapidly descended into a competition to see who could outdo the others in what they could teach. The upshot was one Auror teaching the group basic Occlumency, enough for them to know when someone was attacking them.

On the 31st August Dumbledore drew his Potion Master aside. "Severus, my dear boy," he said in his most grandfatherly tone, "Mr. Potter has been outside my control all Summer, he doesn't trust me, can you see if you can find out what he's been up to?"

Snape grimaced at being called 'dear boy' by the man he knew to have been Grindlewald's lover and then grinned, he'd been given permission to use Legilimency on the Potter B... Brat.

It was the first Gryffindor Potions Lesson of the year that presented him with the opportunity, Potter had refused to rise to Malfoy's baiting, and had this had meant that he'd had no chance of putting him in detention.

As he called the roll and took the time to insult Potter he finally had the chance to make eye-contact, and then fell to the floor, shaking like someone having a grand mal seizure.

Dean Thomas had a younger cousin who had epilepsy, so like all his family members had been taught what to do, he rapidly cleared any items that might injure the Greasy Git, and after the convulsions had stopped, got some of the others to help him put Snape into the recovery position.

Harry sat in his place shocked into immobility, he'd felt the aggressive probing from Snape and as his head began to ache had subconsciously touched the left leg of his glasses, the probing immediately stopped.

Later that day, Severus Snape took up residency alongside the Longbottoms in St. Mungos, the Healers never managed to work out what had caused his mind to collapse.

Inside Snape's head all the times he'd betrayed his precious Lily played over and over in a never ending loop, in trying to get Potter's worst memories, he'd ended up accessing his own, and discovering why you didn't practice Legilimency in front of a mirror.

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Disclaimer: I fear all we have done is to awaken a sleeping giant and fill him with a terrible resolve.

Ambition

Harry walked into the Gryffindor Common Room, face devoid of expression.

"Hermione," Harry called out. "I need you to do a favor for me."

"Of course," she said without thinking. "What do you need?"

"I need you to solve a riddle," he replied. "Come on."

She followed him through a bewildering array of passageways until finally coming to a stop before the entrance of the Ravenclaw dorms.

"Open it," he ordered.

"But . . ." One look at his face dissuaded her from making any objections. "Fine," she sighed.

The guardian statue turned to regard them with empty eyes as it's mouth opened to speak. "When my first is a task to a young girl of spirit, And my second confines her to finish the piece, How hard is her fate! but how great is her merit If by taking my whole she effects her release!"

"Hem-Lock," Hermione answered causing the entrance to open.

"Thank you, Hermione."

"No problem, Harry," she mumbled.

"It might be best if you were to go back to Gryffindor tower," he advised.

"Alright," she agreed unhappily. "Are you ever going to tell me what this was about?"

"It'll be all over the school tomorrow," Harry promised with a slight grin. He waited till his friend was out of sight before stepping in. "Good afternoon everyone," he said loudly.

"What're you doing here, Potter?" one of the students asked in disbelief.

"My good friend Luna Lovegood is in the hospital wing," Harry continued on, ignoring the challenge. "Seems that several someone's thought it would be funny to booby trap her bed."

"So what are you going to do about it?"

"I'm going to give you all a little lesson in proper pureblood etiquette," Harry replied. "As I said before, Luna is my friend. That means she's under my protection." He smiled. "Who can tell me the proper response to an attack on someone that is under your protection?"

A dozen wands appeared in a dozen hands. "You're all alone here, Potter."

"That's right," he agreed coldly.

One of the seventh years hit the door with a locking charm. "No way out, Potter."

"You fools," Harry laughed. "Do you even realize what you've done? You didn't lock me in here with you, you locked yourselves in here with me. Shall we dance?"

IIIIIIIIII

Filius approached the entrance to his House's common room at a dead run. The wards had informed him that there were spells of a less than benign nature flying around and it was his responsibility to find out what was going on.

The shattered remains of the door laying in the hall injected a bit of caution into the proceedings and the former Champion slowed down to assess the situation.

Inside the Common Room, a dozen students were sprawled about and the furniture looked as if an angry giant had used it to express its displeasure.

A low moan alerted the man that at least one of his students was still conscious.

"Who did this? How many of them were there?"

"It was Potter, just Potter," the Ravenclaw Prefect moaned. "He said that Lovegood was under his protection. He said . . . he said that if he had to come back here a second time then he wouldn't have to come here a third."

After a quick investigation, the Staff met to share their findings.

"Does anyone have any initial thoughts they'd like to share?" Dumbledore asked.

"I'm more than a bit impressed by the amount of coordination that went into this," Snape admitted. "When he went in, the entire dorm was empty except for the students that he wished to face."

"Not going to say that it was typical Potter behavior?"

"James Potter would never have been able to even conceive of doing something this ambitious," Snape continued. "Slytherin girlfriends took their Ravenclaw boyfriends on picnics, Hufflepuff siblings asked for help studying, Gryffindor friends threw a pick up Quidditch Game, change the house and repeat and that leaves aside the ones that left the house on their own. Potter had his followers in all four dorms isolate his targets and then, when they were alone, he struck."

"I've had half a dozen students come to me privately to tell me that Mr. Potter was with them when parties unknown invaded the dorms," Filius admitted.

"Most of my house provided Mr. Potter with an alibi within minutes of what happened," Minerva agreed. "The rest of them provided me with an alibi within the hour."

"According to Hufflepuff house, Harry was in the common room with the other Puffs doing his homework," Sprout said with a trace of pride in her voice. "Not a single member of the house will say anything different."

"With the other Puffs?" Minerva asked with a raised eyebrow.

"That's what they said," Sprout agreed. "They tell me they're just correcting the Hat's mistake."

"Severus," Albus said quickly to derail the coming argument.

"I doubt any of my Slytherins think manufacturing an alibi would be worth doing if I'm the one they'd report to," Snape admitted. "Though a couple of my Prefects did take points from Potter at the time of the incident." He smiled. "They were both on opposite sides of the castle of course."

"Do we know if Harry intended to bog us down in conflicting stories or if this was spontaneous on the part of the other students?" Dumbledore spoke up.

"It appears to be spontaneous," Minerva said cautiously. "But we can't be sure."

"And the students he put in the hospital wing won't say a word," Filius sighed. "Even if they weren't afraid of Harry, there's still the threat the rest of the school presents to anyone that steps out of line."

"I thought one of your Prefects had identified Mr. Potter as the assailant?"

"About that, the Prefect that earlier identified Mr. Potter has retracted his statement. He now claims not to remember who did it and is adamant that it was not Mr. Potter." Filius shrugged.

"I'm reminded of another student that began building up his network of contacts and his store of favors when he went to this school," Dumbledore said softly. "Only he didn't do things nearly so well, nor was he so thorough."

"Albus," Minerva gasped. "You can't be comparing him to . . . to . . ."

"Voldemort?" Dumbledore asked with a raised eyebrow. "No. I was comparing him to me."

There was silence for several seconds before Minerva managed to regain her wits.

"Any thoughts on how we should respond to the incident?" she asked. "I can't imagine the parents of the students in the hospital wing would be willing to just let the matter drop."

"I would suggest we tell them to reread the school motto," Dumbledore said serenely.

Filius nodded thoughtfully, knowing the families involved, he didn't expect they'd be willing to wait more than two more days before one of them stormed into the castle demanding answers and actions. As it happened, the first was in his office within twelve hours.

Flitwick sighed when he saw who was waiting in front of his office door after his first class.

"Filius," the man said coldly.

"Archibald," the Charms Master replied. "What can I do for you?"

"You can tell me why my son's been stripped of his prefect badge and why he's in the hospital," Archibald growled.

"He didn't take the school motto to heart." Filius brushed past the man to enter his office. "Was there anything else?"

"It's your job as the Head of House to prevent these outrages!" the angry father bellowed.



"A duty I failed," Filius agreed. "Starting with Ms. Lovegood."

"To hell with that tart," the man growled. "How are you going to punish Potter?"

"There's nothing I can do," Flitwick admitted. "I have no witnesses and Mr. Potter has a nearly every student willing to give him an alibi. What would you have me do?"

"You were a dueling champion."

"Do you know what it takes to win a duel?" Filius asked. "Desire, skill, power, and speed. I am more skilled than Mr. Potter, he outclasses me in the other three areas by a wide margin. I ask again, what would you have me do?"

"I . . . you . . ." the man sputtered.

"If you like, I would be more than happy to referee your duel with young Mr. Potter," Filius offered. "Just as I would be happy to offer my support to your widow after the duel. I believe Shelia still has a fondness for champagne and strawberries?"

"You haven't heard the last of me," Archibald screamed over his shoulder as he stormed out of the castle.

"I would never presume myself to be that lucky," Filius sighed. He checked the time, only five minutes to get to the next staff meeting.

Luck was with him and he arrived with seconds to spare. The other Professors seated along one side of a long table facing a single solitary chair.

"One of the parents wanted to have a meeting," Filius explained as he took his seat.

"The first of many, I'm afraid," Dumbledore sighed. "Have the first student sent in."

Daphne smiled when she walked into the meeting room and immediately came under the scrutiny of the collected Hogwarts' staff.

"I expect that you have some questions for me," the girl said calmly.

"Have a seat, Ms. Greengrass," Minerva ordered.

"Thank you, Professor," Daphne smiled at the older woman as she slipped into the chair. "What would you like to know?"

"How did Potter gain the allegiance of my house?" Snape asked eagerly.

"I'd had thought you'd have been more annoyed then you seem to be?" Daphne stated calmly.

"I respect the power, ambition, and intelligence that Potter has showed," Snape said impatiently. "And I wish that he'd shown those qualities in the past so that I could have gotten to know Lily's son." Snape's eyes were shining. "The fact that he hid for years under the exterior of a dunder head Gryffindor . . . god, the years I've wasted."

"I see." Daphne looked at the Professors calmly. "Please understand that there are several things that I am not permitted to share."

"Of course," Dumbledore agreed. "Please tell us what you can."

"After he killed Slytherin's monster, he gathered up the house's Prefects in one room and calmly told them that he didn't blame the house for what happened." Daphne smiled. "But that he would not take such an enlightened view in the future. He told them that if anyone had a family member do something similar to one of his friends then they would die, along with every Prefect and ten carefully selected students from the rest of the house." Daphne's smile deepened when she saw the stricken look on McGonagall face and the approving one on her own Head of House's. "They pointed out that he was only a second year and that he was outnumbered."

"And?" Snape prompted with an expectant smile.

"And Harry was the only one able to walk out of that room under his own power," Daphne giggled.

"How in the world did a second year manage to do that?" Filius muttered in shock.

"I asked one of the Prefects later, she said she figured it was mostly accidental magic, but admitted it could have been spells she'd never heard of."

"I see." The Charms Professor appeared to be deep in thought.

"That's when I met him," Daphne continued. "The Prefects had ordered me to be on the lookout for Professors."

"And since you saw your chances of defeating the boy that had just taken out several prefects being slim to none, you decided to make damn sure that you were on his good side," Snape said in satisfaction. "Twenty points to Slytherin."

"It was years ago, Professor," Daphne pointed out.

"Yes, but I'm only finding out about it now," Snape retorted. "In any case, a true Slytherin thinks long-term - as, it appears, does Mr Potter - and that is what the points are for. I'm not one to miss any opportunity to give points to my House, especially for properly demonstrating the qualities valued by our Founder. Go on."

"I helped him to the hospital wing, told Madame Pomfrey that he fell down some stairs, and was assigned to be his channel to Slytherin house. I'm told that he made similar pronouncements to the other two houses, but I'm not sure what happened with them." Daphne focused on the Headmaster. "I'd like to add something, if I may, sir."

"Of course," Dumbledore agreed.

"You may not be aware of how much influence Harry has over your colleagues in the Ministry but I am. More importantly, he is. If you try to go against Harry then he will break you, take away everything you worked so hard to get, and leave you with nothing." Daphne met the

old man's gaze, allowing him a glimpse at her mind. "Just a friendly warning."

"Your grandfather has taken a liking to him then?"

"My grandfather has suggested that I have Harry father my first child," Daphne said. "We figured he wasn't joking after he suggested I avoid marriage so the children will be Greengrasses rather than Potters."

Snape laughed loudly at that. "How did you keep Draco contained?"

"Those two goons that follow him around aren't bodyguards," Daphne said carefully. "That leaves aside the note sent to Narcissa Malfoy explaining that her son was attempting to play in the big leagues and that if she didn't want him squashed, then she had better make sure he knew that there were ground rules that needed to be followed."

Snape cleared his throat. "The current pass phrase for my office is 'Ad eundum quo nemo ante iit' wait for fifteen heartbeats and say 'Aegrescit medendo' then turn the knob left for half a turn right for a full turn and left again to open. In the third drawer on the right side of my desk tap the left eye of the inlaid snake with your left index finger the right eye with your right index finger and then circle the head with your right thumb in a clockwise motion. Inside the drawer is a bottle of ten year old Torrylin. Please present it to Mr. Potter with my compliments."

"Yes, Professor," Daphne agreed.

"Where did you find a bottle of Torrylin?" McGonagall demanded.

"Being a Slytherin is all about making contacts," Snape said simply. "Now please assure me that I haven't done something bloody stupid in giving the boy one of the better bottles in my collection."

"Don't be insulting," Minerva scoffed. "As if a student could get through my house without learning something so elementary. Be a different story if you'd tried to foist a bottle of that sissy French vinegar on him."

"Of course," Snape agreed.

"Why don't we call one of mine in next?" Sprout suggested. "Please tell Ms. Abbot that we would like to see her on your way out, Ms. Greengrass."

"I'll see to it, Professor," Daphne agreed as she left the room with a flourish.

Susan Bones and Hannah Abbot walked into the room and calmly shared the seat facing the panel of Professors.

"Thank you for coming, Ms. Abbot," Dumbledore said kindly. "And it's a surprise to see you, Ms. Bones since I was sure that we only called for Ms. Abbot?"

"No way I was gonna make Hannah come by herself," Susan sniffed. "No Puff would."

"The fact that your presence is a not so subtle threat is beside the point is it?" Snape asked snidely.

"Of course," Susan agreed. "That part is just a bonus."

"Please pass my best on to your Aunt," Dumbledore said with a smile.

"I will, Professor," Susan agreed. "Maybe I can do it with Harry after the meeting?" she mused. "Aunty Amelia just adores him."

"All the subtlety of a hammer," Snape groused.

"Please do so," Dumbledore agreed. "Take that as permission to visit with your Aunt after you meet with us."

"Our friends too?" Hannah asked shyly.

"What percentage of the student population is that?" the Headmaster asked with a twinkle in his eye. "Never mind, perhaps it would be easier to extend an invitation for your Aunt to visit the castle?"

"Probably," Susan agreed.

"What do you want to know?" Hannah asked.

"What was the reaction when Mr. Potter delivered a threat to the house?" Poppy asked.

"I wasn't there," Hannah said quickly. "But I did hear about it later from my cousin who was a Prefect that year. They laughed at him."

"They laughed at him and told him that if he managed to harm a single Puff then the rest of the house would hunt him down," Susan added. "By that time word had already gotten around about what he'd done to the Slytherins."

"How did Mr. Potter react?"

"He waited until they settled down and then calmly agreed that if any Puff managed to harm any one of his friends, then he would kill us all," Hannah said softly. "No one laughed after that."

"And no one in our house had much to do with Potter until the bloody tournament, did you know that he warned Cedric about the Dragons?"

"I did not," Sprout admitted. "That's when the house started warming up to him?"

"It was, Professor."

"Then we called another meeting," Susan added. "We told him that if anyone managed to hurt one of his friends, they'd have Hufflepuff after them."

"The look of confusion on Harry's face was delicious," Hannah giggled.

"Didn't last for long, Harry understands loyalty and he understands that we understand loyalty," Susan finished.

"Twenty points to Gryffindor and another twenty to Hufflepuff for showing loyalty," Professor Sprout said, unable to hide the wide smile on her face. "Please be so good as to make sure Harry and his friends know the password to the common room so that they can spend time with the other Puffs whenever they wish."

"Too late, Professor," Susan replied.

"Then please pass my compliments to Mr. Potter," Professor Sprout said. "And tell him that I'm proud to have such an exemplary student in my house."

"We will, Professor."

"Please tell everyone else that they're excused until tomorrow," Dumbledore said with a grandfatherly smile. "And please feel free to have your meeting with your aunt in the east ballroom. That should be large enough to hold all of your friends."

"Thank you, Professor."

"You may as well tell Greengrass that she's welcome to invite anyone else she thinks should attend," Snape added sourly.

"We will, Professor," Hannah agreed.

"Not at all." Dumbledore smiled at the girls. "Drippy, please make sure the east ballroom is clean and that the students and their guest have adequate nourishment."

"Yes, Headmaster," a squeaky voice replied. There was a pause. "Headmaster?"

"Yes, Drippy?"

"Harry Potter sir was in the kitchens with all the elvies when bad Ravensclaws got hurt."

"Of course he was." Dumbledore sighed, when had Harry taken the castle from him? "Than you, Drippy. That will be all."

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Dumbledore looked up when his wards informed him that there was someone outside his office.

"Come in," the old man called out. "Ambassador Patil, what a pleasant surprise."

"I have come to meet with my daughters!" the man barked.

"Of course, you may feel free," Dumbledore agreed. "Lemon drop?"

"Thank you, no." The man spun on his heel and abruptly left.

Dumbledore got up to follow him but stopped abruptly when two more men entered his office.

"Ambassador Li Yī děng gōng, Mr. Chang Yī děng bó, to what do I owe the honor of your visit?" Dumbledore said respectfully.

"Was my daughter involved in the late unpleasantness?" Ambassador Li asked bluntly.

"I don't believe so," Dumbledore said carefully. "It seems she had decided to study in the library with several other students and . . . and she is one of the students that swears up and down that Harry Potter was her when parties unknown broke into the Ravenclaw dorms."

"Thank you," the man said with a look of relief on his face.

"What about my daughter?" Chang demanded.

"She wasn't one of the students that was sent to the hospital wing," Dumbledore said carefully.

"Was she one of the Lovegood girl's tormentors?" Chang persisted.

"I . . ." Dumbledore tried to think of a diplomatic way of putting it.



"Yes, then?" Chang's face tightened in anger. "Please excuse me." Without another word, the man stormed off in search of his misbehaving child.

"I suggest that you go with them to assure the girl's safety," the Ambassador said in a tone that suggested he cared little for Cho's fate.

"Surely he wouldn't... She's his daughter for god's sakes!"

"He has one dozen daughters and fifteen sons," the Ambassador explained, "Cho was the youngest and the favorite until today. He can afford to lose a daughter, he can not afford what his family will pay if this causes some difficulty with the Emperor's hopeful relationship with young Mr. Potter."

"Please excuse me," Dumbledore said with a bow before rushing out of the room.

IIIIIIII

It did not take Ambassador Patil long to find one of his children, pity it wasn't the one he was after.

"What are you doing here, father?"

"Parvati, tell your sister to meet me in this classroom," he ordered. "Tell her I expect her to come here as quickly as possible."

"Yes, father," the girl squeaked.

His other daughter arrived in less than five minutes.

"Sit down, Padma," her father barked.

"Yes, father," the girl agreed meekly.

"Tell me, were you involved in what happened?" he ordered.

"Yes," she agreed.

Upon hearing his daughter's answer, a brief look of despair flashed across his face before he again mastered his emotions. "You will apologize for the role you took," he said firmly. "Then you will withdraw from school and I will give you to a suitable husband. One that will not allow you to continue this sort of behavior."

"I will not," she said firmly.

"What did you say?" her father asked in a low dangerous voice.

"I will not apologize," Padma insisted. She raised her chin imperiously.

Her father closed his eyes and slowly counted to ten. "You are my daughter and you will . . ." he broke off when the door flew off its hinges and he caught a brief flash of his other daughter in the hallway before an unfamiliar young man stepped into the room.

"Problem?" the young man asked calmly.

"Harry," Padma gasped in relief.

"Mr. Potter, I presume?" Padma's father asked. The unfamiliar boy nodded. "Please accept my sincerest apologies on behalf of my family along with my assurance that her behavior will be punished and that any restitution you demand will be promptly made."

"Restitution?" Harry asked in confusion. "For what?"

"For my daughter's treatment of young Ms. Lovegood," he said in shame.

"Your daughter helped Luna to the hospital wing and sat with her until Madame Pomfrey kicked her out, then she came to me." Harry smiled. "I came here to tell you that I considered both of the Patil sisters to be my very good friends and that I would be most annoyed if anything were to happen to either of them."

"I . . ." He was overcome by relief. "I am very happy to hear that, Mr. Potter. More happy than words can express." He pulled his daughter

into a hug. "And I am sorry daughter, for even thinking that you could have been capable of such cruelty."

"Father?" Padma murmured.

"I was told that you were one of the malefactors that caused Ms. Lovegood to be hospitalized," he explained. "The only way I could think to protect you was to get you out of the country and into a marriage. But that will not be necessary now."

"Parvati!" Harry called out.

"Yes, Harry?" The girl stuck her head into the room.

"Thank you for bringing me here to resolve this misunderstanding." Harry beckoned the girl closer. "Would you care to introduce me to your father?"

"Father, I would like you to meet our very good friend and protector, Harry Potter, Slayer of Voldemort."

"A pleasure to meet such a good friend of my daughters' and a thousand thanks for preventing me from making the worst mistake of my life."

"I am always happy to be of service," Harry replied.

"Harry," Padma hiccuped and blushed deeply. "I'd like you to introduce you to our father, Rakesh Patil, Ambassador to the Court of St. James."

"An honor and a pleasure," Harry said with a slight bow.

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Cho's father was dragging the girl out of the castle by her wrist when he found his path blocked by his superior's daughter.

"Harry would not like it if you were to take her without speaking with him first," Su said calmly. "He would be here himself but there is another matter that he has to take care of first."

"Please tell Mr. Potter that I am very sorry for the actions of my daughter and that I promise to make amends to her victim," he said. "Now step aside."

"Harry would be very unhappy if you did not meet with him before you leave," the girl said firmly, drawing her wand. "I will not have him think I was responsible for you not getting his message. Not after my earlier failure."

"Perhaps you could explain what is going on?" He suggested.

"How is your wrist, Cho?" Su asked, ignoring the girl's father.

"It hurts a bit," Cho admitted. "But I don't think daddy was trying to hurt me."

"Go to the hospital wing," Su ordered. She turned to regard Cho's father. "Harry would be very displeased if he thought you'd hurt her intentionally. It would be best if she got her wrist taken care of before the meeting."

Cho's father became aware of both his superior and Dumbledore watching silently.

"Go to the hospital wing, Cho," he said neutrally. "It seems that there is more here than I was led to expect."

"Yes, father," she agreed. "Than you, Su."

"Thank Harry, I am merely his voice in this."

"Su, do you mind telling us what's going on?" her father asked.

"Cho was Cedric's girlfriend, so Harry feels responsible for her. Cho was also no worse to Luna than she was to anyone else. The

students that went to the hospital wing did more than say nasty things, Cho did not."

"Good work, Su."

"Thank you, father. But it's Harry who deserves any praise, I am, as I said before, only his voice in this. It's part of my atonement for my failure to look after Luna. I should not have stayed in the library so late."

"Harry said that?" Dumbledore asked in shock.

"Harry said the opposite," Su replied. "But I know the truth and that is all that matters." She turned back to Cho's father. "I am to take you to Harry's office for your meeting."

"Harry has an office?" Dumbledore mumbled.

"The house elves found and furnished it for him," Su agreed. "Follow me." She led them through a blinding array of passageways ways to a large oak door. Opening the door revealed a waiting area. "Have a seat, please."

The girl walked up to the office door and knocked three times.

A muffled, "come in," caused the door to swing open and the girl disappeared inside.

"I have brought my father and Mr. Chang," Su reported.

"Good work, Su, have a seat." Harry watched the girl take a place across from him. "How are you holding up?"

"I am still feeling quite guilty at what happened and unhappy that you did not allow me to join you in teaching Luna's tormentors a lesson."

"I understand that," Harry agreed. "Do you understand my reasons for keeping you out of it?"

"I do, Harry," Su agreed, "I also do not agree."

"And I understand why you might not agree," Harry said with a smile.

"May I be excused to visit Luna in the Hospital Wing?" she asked, a trace of emotion coloring her voice.

"You may sit by her bed until lights out. At which time, I expect you to return to your dorms or take one of the spare beds in the Hospital Wing. Send in Mr. Chang on your way out, please."

"Thank you, Harry." Su rose from her seat and walked out of the room.

Harry smiled as Cho's father came into the room. "Have a seat, please. I'm told you were trying to remove Cho from Hogwarts?"

"I was informed that my daughter had been acting in a matter that shames her family," the man explained. "I came to withdraw her from Hogwarts so that I may send her home where she would cause no more trouble and to hopefully be safe from any retribution."

"You have good sources," Harry complimented the man. "But they left a few things out. It's true that Cho called Luna names, it's also true that Cho called everyone names. I'm told that she'd usually burst into tears and apologize shortly afterward. She's had a bit of a rough time so no one bears her any ill will."

"I see."

"The important thing is that I count her among my circle of friends," Harry continued. "Do you understand?"

"I do, Mr. Potter."

"Wonderful." He rang the bell on his desk.

"Yes, Harry Potter sir?" Dobby asked.

"Send everyone in and see if you can find us some snacks, please," Harry asked.

"Yes, Harry Potter sir," the house elf agreed.

"Thank you, Dobby."

"This office is better than mine," Dumbledore murmured staring at the thick carpets, hand made furniture, and unparalleled view of the lake.

"I'd thought the outer office was nice," Ambassador Li agreed.

"I don't use it too often," Harry said. "But it's come in handy for today."

"I see." Ambassador Li locked eyes with the boy. "I bear a message from the Celestial Emperor. He is quite interested in your surviving the killing curse and has heard news of your adventures. He requests that you be good enough to send him a written report of all that has happened to you."

"If I may presume to interrupt," Dumbledore said quickly. "I would strongly recommend you do this, Harry."

"I'll talk to Hermione," Harry agreed. "Would your Celestial Emperor prefer this report to be in English or Chinese?"

"It might be best to send both to the embassy," Ambassador Li replied. "Make the report in English look nice and have our daughters take care of the translation."

"Alright," Harry agreed. He looked up. "Gentlemen, if you will excuse me. I'm afraid I have a visitor waiting outside for a meeting that I can not put off. If you like, we are holding a gathering in the East Ballroom. I shall have an escort brought to show you the way."

"Did you think I forgot where it was, Harry?" Dumbledore asked with twinkling eyes.

"I thought you might like to sit in on the first couple minutes of my meeting," Harry replied.

"Come in," Harry ordered, causing the door to swing open to reveal a nervous Hermione. "Dobby!"

"Yes, Harry Potter sir?"

"Please show my guests to the East Ballroom. Hermione, please come in and have a seat."

"What's going on, Harry?" Hermione asked softly, looking lost.

"I seem to have taken over the school," Harry replied. "Truth is, I hadn't realized how much influence I had until Luna got hurt. I thought I was just friends with a lot of people."

"How come you never told me about them?" Hermione asked softly.

"How come you never told me you have a study group on Friday nights with Daphne and Tracy?" Harry countered, causing the girl to blush a deep red.

"Did you have any questions, Headmaster?"

"Just one," Dumbledore agreed. "Did you plan to bury us in alibis or was that spontaneous?"

"I planned to bust up the Ravenclaws and then take my lumps. To be honest, I expected that I'd be kicked out of Hogwarts and I made arrangements with a couple other schools to take me in should that prove necessary."

"I see. Thank you, Harry."

"Happy to be of service, Headmaster," Harry replied.

"One more thing." Dumbledore paused at the door.

"Yes?"

"Just who might I approach to see about scheduling some time to meet with you in the future, Harry?"



"Harry?" Hermione asked hopefully, managing a slight smile when she got a nod in return. "Talk to me, Headmaster. I always take care of Harry's schedule."

"Thank you, Ms. Granger."

Harry waited until the door was closed. "Come here, Hermione."

The girl walked around the table and Harry pulled her into his lap and wrapped his arms around her.

"You're my best friend Harry, you know that, right?"

"And you're mine," Harry agreed.

Hermione laid her head on his shoulder. "Just promise that you'll never leave me."

"I promise," he agreed, stroking her hair. "We've been friends since that bloody troll and we'll be friends until the sun grows cold."

"I know you have to do other things today, but can we just stay here like this for a little while?"

"As long as you like, Hermione. As long as you like."

IIIIIIIIII

Dumbledore's eyebrows raised when he saw the two girls stagger past on their way to Harry's office.

"How curious," he mumbled to himself. "Drippy!"

"Yes, Headmaster sir?"

"Please keep an eye on Ms. Lovegood and notify Poppy immediately if she has any trouble," Dumbledore ordered.

"Yes, Headmaster sir."

Albus quickened his step and smiled when he saw who had appointed herself avgreeter for the impromptu gathering in the East Ballroom.

"Headmaster."

"Ms. Greengrass, I was hoping to run into you. I recently saw Misses Lovegood and Li in the hall headed towards Harry's office."

"Thank you, Headmaster." Daphne turned. "Susan, Hannah, we're needed elsewhere!"

IIIIIIII

Harry was in the process of trying to figure out how to dislodge the sleeping girl on his lap when the wards informed him that there were two people waiting outside his office door.

"Come!" he called out. The door opened and Harry frowned. "What are you doing out of the Hospital Wing, Luna?"

"Speaking with you, of course," Luna replied.

"I am sorry, Harry," Su said quickly. "But she insisted and Madame Pomfrey told me that she could recover outside the Hospital Wing as well as she could within it so long as she was never left unattended and so long as she returned for check ups every day. I could not say no when Luna asked that I attend her, not after what my carelessness allowed to happen."

"Sit down, Luna," Harry told the swaying girl.

"I asked you not to do anything," Luna said as Su helped her into a chair.

"And I told you I wouldn't so long as they didn't cross any lines," Harry agreed. "They did and I reacted." Pomfrey had stated that another five minutes and the damage would have been permanent, another ten and it wouldn't have mattered.

"Violence only begets more violence," Luna tried again.

"Only if you're not using enough of it," Harry countered.

"The other students will no longer be a problem," Su offered. "I am unsure about their families, you would have to ask Daphne."

The voices woke Hermione and she blushed when she realized how her position on Harry's lap looked to the other girls. "Um."

"You can stay where you are or you can take one of the other chairs," Harry told her gently.

"I'll take one of the other chairs," the blushing girl whispered.

Daphne burst into the office followed by Susan and Hannah.

"Professor Dumbledore told us that Luna was out of the hospital wing," Daphne announced.

"He figured she was on her way to you," Hannah added.

"Dobby!" Harry called out.

"Yes, Harry Potter sir?"

"Please get us some more chairs and tell my guests that I may be delayed a bit more," Harry told the little elf.

"Yes, Harry Potter sir."

"Daphne," Harry began. "Please give us your analysis on how the families will react?"

"Doubt they'll do more than bluster and look for a chance to bury a dagger in your back in the future. A couple have already sent out feelers asking what they have to do to keep things from escalating. The politically connected are terrified at what you could do to them if

you so wished and the head of one, the Fosters, has gone to Grandfather to ask that he act as a go between."

"Thank you, Daphne." His eyes settled on the injured girl.

"You still should not have done this, not for me anyway," Luna insisted. "I'm not worth the trouble you're going to find yourself in because of what you did for me."

"Please explain, Susan, Hannah," Harry asked.

"If Harry allowed what happened to you to go unpunished, it would have given ideas to the idiots like Draco that they could act against him. Truth be told, Harry should have killed the bastards for what they did to you."

"Daphne," Harry prompted.

"One of them is my first cousin, I've put out that I used my close relationship with Harry to intercede on their behalf. My aunt now owes me her daughter's life, the power of the Greengrass family has been enhanced through my ability to moderate Harry, and my power within Slytherin has gone up for the same reason."

"And you are worth it, Luna!" Hannah added firmly.

"Dobby!"

"Yes, Harry Potter sir?"

"Could you arrange a way for us to transport Luna to the party?"

"Yes, Harry Potter sir. Missy Greenygrass' sedan chair will be waiting in the hall."

"Thank you, Dobby." Harry waited until the elf disappeared before shooting Daphne a meaningful look.

"So I've got a couple fantasies involving a victory parade through Diagon Alley," the girl replied with a shrug. "It's not my fault that

Dobby was more than happy to help me prepare to make them a reality."

"I don't want to know, do I?"

"Probably not, but you're going to find out," Daphne giggled.

Daphne sidled up to Hermione as they left the office and made Luna comfortable in her new means of transportation.

"Drop back a bit with me, will you?" Daphne asked.

"Why?" Hermione asked.

"Because I'd like a bit of privacy for a conversation that I believe is going to be exceedingly awkward," Daphne said.

Hermione slowed down and didn't say a word until they'd fallen behind the main group.

"What did you want to speak with me about, Daphne?" Hermione asked.

"You're Harry's best friend and I wanted to make sure that nothing happened to change that. There is a rumor going around that I am servicing Harry sexually in exchange for his showing mercy towards the Ravenclaws he put into the Hospital Wing. I am not going to do anything to stamp down this rumor since it meshes quite nicely with the fact that I have, with Harry's permission, put out that I did indeed beg for mercy since one of the Ravenclaws is my cousin."

"Are you?"

"No."

"Would you like to?" Hermione blurted. The girl turned a deep red after she realized what she'd said.

"At least as much as every other girl in the castle," Daphne agreed cheerfully.

"Some of the boys too," Hermione giggled.

"There's a thought."

"What?"

"Thinking of starting a rumor that Draco is interested in Harry. Worst case scenario, it's true. Best case, it distracts the bastard."

"So are you going to be . . . um . . ." Hermione's blush deepened.

"I'd like to give it a shot if you don't mind," Daphne replied with a matching blush. "Just as much as the rest of the girls in the castle."

"That's going to be a frustrating thing to schedule," Hermione joked.

"Only if you don't schedule some time for yourself," Daphne replied.

"Maybe I should schedule you with Tracy to save time," Hermione rejoined.

"Maybe you should keep your voices down if you don't want me to hear what you're talking about!" Harry's called back, causing both girl's mouths to shut with a snap.

"I believe that you have rendered them speechless, Harry," Su reported. "Hermione, please remember to put schedule me with Luna so that I may assist her until her injuries heal."

"I wasn't . . . it was a joke . . . I . . ." Hermione stammered.

The other girls burst into a fit of giggles.

"Don't ever change, Hermione," Harry laughed.

AN: Making my second international move this year and going to a place with very limited internet access. Expect updates to be slow to non existent until next April-May.

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Scenes and Polish by Phil

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Mistake corrected by: David Ford, Ordieth, Corin Wolfkin

Ideas by: , Rakesh

Omake by Alan

"Thank you, Harry, but I will not need transport to whatever gathering you are having," Luna said in a sad voice. "I will be contacting my father to see if I can be removed from Hogwarts."

Luna's statement shocked all of the listening students, and those that had been getting out of their chairs flopped back down into them.

"I have heard Daphne explain that the families of the students you hurt will not retaliate, and that she has gained some political clout from my being hurt; I do not care to be the currency that granted someone I don't really know such clout," Luna explained.

"While Su and I were on our way here, we met the Headmaster, and Daphne, Susan, and Hannah all arrived because the Headmaster told them I was on my way to see you; that means you have the staff and administration of this school backing you. I do not want to be the downfall of this institution."

"Susan has explained that you, Harry, could have killed the people that hurt me and that not hurting or killing them sent a message of weakness to the rest of the school; I am not willing to be the reason you became a dictator, Harry."

"Before I managed to get Madam Pomfrey to release me, Su and Padma kept me up to date on some of the happenings. Both girls have mostly ignored me for the time I have been at Hogwarts. They became interested in being my friends only after my being hurt

brought to light how you were going to react; I tend to want my friends to be my friends because they like me, not because you, Harry, want to protect me."

"And finally, Harry, the only person in this room that should have said I was worth it was you. Not Hannah, who on more than one occasion in the past, has called me Looney."

"Luna!" Hermione started tentatively only to be interrupted.

"Hermione, you accept me, you do not like me. Do not think I haven't seen you rolling your eyes every time I mention an article I have read in the Quibbler"

Luna stood on shaky legs and lurched to the door before turning back to the chastised group. "I will be returning to the hospital wing now, and will be asking Madam Pomfrey for a chance to post an owl to my father, enjoy your gathering."

It was very quiet after Luna left the room .



Disclaimer: Damn it, Janet. I love you.

Working Title: Auror Ron

Auror Thomas ignored the sounds of his rookie emptying his stomach as he examined the crime scene. It looked as if the perps had forced the door killed the father right off, then spent a few hours 'entertaining' themselves with the mother, the ten year old daughter, and the five year old son before putting the poor devils out of their misery. A dark mark hovered above the house, similar to the ones he'd seen in the old days but not identical.

"Don't say a word about what we found here, rookie," he ordered. It looked as if someone wanted to upset the balance, as if someone wanted to ignore the agreement, as if someone wanted to go back to the bad old days. Damn them!

IIIIIIII

Auror Sergeant Ronald Weasley stared at the Minister's door for a few moments before raising his fist to knock. It's been a while since he'd been summoned to the halls of power, he wondered what they wanted this time?

Before he could knock, the door sprung open to reveal the Minister's smiling face.

"Have a seat, Ron," the Minister said with a grin.

"Yes, sir," Ron agreed.

"Can't an old comrade at arms call me Shack?" the Minister laughed. "At least when it's just the two of us here?"

"What can I do for you, Shack?" Ron asked, wondering what the bastard's game was.

"You hear about what happened to that family up the coast?"

"Not a word," Ron replied.

"Good, we've been doing our best to keep it quiet." The Minister took a deep breath. "Looks like we have a Death Eater attack to deal with, nasty, only thing off about it is the Dark Mark a bit different."

"You want me to round up the usual suspects?"

"I've got other people keeping an eye on the likeliest and the investigation. I want you to find Potter." the Minister paused paused for the explosion that never came. "Well?"

"Imagine it's going to be hard to get him to agree what with the price you put on his head," Ron said dryly. "One hundred thousand galleons, dead or alive wasn't it?"

"I'm not going to rehash the argument about Potter," the Minister growled, "the other side demanded we throw him to the wolves or they wouldn't end the war. I did what I had to in order to keep the public safe, that's my job. If one or two people have to be sacrificed to keep the rest safe, so be it."

"He might see it differently," Ron said quietly, "you remember what happened to the men you sent to bring him in, don't you?"

"They were under orders not to harm him," Shack tried to muster a defense.

"You don't consider life in Azkaban to be harmful?" Ron suppressed a laugh. "You . . ." he bit his tongue, reminding himself of the family his pay supported.

"I insisted the Dementors be removed and cast into the veil first," Shack replied, "leaving aside the concerns regarding their loyalty to the Ministry, it was the least I could do for our greatest hero."

"I see." Ron decided to go straight to the point. "What do you want me to do?"

"Put out the word that all is forgiven, that we need Potter, that we have a new Dark Lord, and that we need his help to deal with him."

"And you think Harry will come?"

"It's your job to convince him that it will be in his best interests," Shack agreed, "I'm prepared to give him five hundred thousand reasons to forgive and forget should that prove necessary."

"And if he demands that we sacrifice a few pawns like the Death Eaters did?" Ron asked.

"Malfoy and his ilk are sure to be involved with the new Dark Lord, I'll cover for a reasonable amount of payback should Potter demand it."

"I see." He did and it disgusted him. "I'll need an expense account."

"I'll see that you get an extra ten thousand galleons a month."

"Fifteen and I want a one time payment of one hundred thousand to start out with," Ron demanded. That should be enough to get his wife and children some place safe.

"You can't expect . . ."

"Minister, with all due respect, I am the only man you have on the force that has a chance of being able to approach Harry Potter without getting cursed on sight. I am the only man you have that the old crowd is likely to speak with. Most importantly, I have a family to look after and if there's a new Dark Lord in England, I want them to be far away from here." Ron gave a bitter smile. "It'll be hard enough to look for Harry without spending every waking moment worrying about them."

"Done," Shack said sourly. "I'll expect results within the month."

"Only if Harry decides he wants to speak with me, you'll have a longer wait if he doesn't."

He strolled out of the Ministry building and spent the most of the remainder of the day arranging his family's escape from what he feared would soon be a war zone. Another hour was spent on his

escape route leaving a short amount of time at the end of it to speak with his first contact. Someone he hadn't seen for a very long time, someone he'd once thought he'd spend the remainder of his life with.

Ron stared at the bushy haired woman for a few minutes with a nostalgic smile. She was hunched over a desk, glaring at some forgotten manuscript trying to divine its secrets. Everyone had assumed that she'd go on to great things, to research, to politics, to the heights of business. Only he'd been unsurprised to learn that she'd taken a low level position at the British Library. To be surrounded by books had always been her chief ambition.

"Hello, Hermione," he said softly.

"Wha?" she looked up, a mixture of confusion and surprise on her face. "You!" it had always been impressive how much emotion she could pack into a single word. "What do you want?"

"I'm looking for Harry," he replied.

"Well I don't know and I wouldn't tell you if I did," she spat.

"Is that any way to talk to the man you almost married?" The sundering of their engagement had seemed like a the worst thing in the world at the time, several years had provided the necessary distance to learn that it had saved him from making the worst mistake of his life.

"Almost ruined my life with," she growled, "what girl likes to learn that her fiancé is fucking Lavender Brown."

"True in the first part, wrong in the second. Point of fact, I didn't start fucking Lavender Brown till after we went out separate ways."

"What?" she choked. "I know you . . ."

"In fact, I wasn't fucking anyone on the side, despite how hard up I was thanks to being engaged to a frigid prude." He took a deep calming breath. "Sorry. I was not seeing anyone on the side anymore than you were when we were together."

"But . . . I know you were cheating on me!" Hermione insisted.

"I knew you were cheating on me too," Ron said mildly.

"I wasn't."

"Nor was I," he agreed. "We were both petty jealous children. Marrying you would have been the worst mistake of my life, just as marrying me would have been the worst mistake in yours."

"Oh." She blinked her eyes a couple times and turned back to her book. "You can show yourself out, can't you?"

"That's all you have to say?"

"It is," she agreed. "I've decided that it doesn't matter if you're lying or telling the truth, not anymore. As for the reason you came, I do not know where Harry is."

"Fair enough," he agreed. He stared at her for a few seconds, hoping to make her blurt out a tidbit of information to shatter the uncomfortable silence that had arose. He grinned, it didn't work, she hadn't changed much from the old days. "How are you wards?"

"What?"

"Be sure to update them if you haven't lately, an upgrade would be a good idea also."

"Why?"

"Death Eater attack, wiped out a whole family, nasty." He cocked his head. "S'why the Ministry sent me out in search of Harry."

"They cast him into the cold and they expect him to come back to clean up their mess again?" She demanded, outraged by the notion.

"That's my read on the situation," Ron agreed.

She stared at him for a few minutes, shocked at the nonchalant way he'd agreed.

"Have a good life, Hermione."

"Have a good life, Ron," she echoed dumbly.

He found a comfortable place to watch and settled down for what could be a wrong wait. The girl he'd once considered the love of his life finished her day and went home for a quiet night of reading followed by an early bed. She woke up the next morning, ate breakfast, and went back to work. At no time did she send or receive any owls or, so far as he could tell, use any other forms of magical communication.

He jotted out a few quick notes on holes he saw in her wards, slipped it into her mailbox, and went home to an empty bed. It was rough sending his loved ones away, it would have been rougher still to lose them because he didn't.

He walked past Hermione's flat the next day and was pleased to see that she'd taken his suggestions seriously. He wasn't too worried about his friend's safety, there weren't many in the world stupid enough to go after one of Harry Potter's friends, not when he was still at large anyway, not after what he'd done the last time. Harry's reputation had protected Hermione from the Ministry and, assuming the Minister's suspicion that the new Death Eaters were controlled by the Malfoy family would certainly protect her from them. Still, never hurt to take chances.

Nodding to himself, Ron found a public floo connection and set about arranging his next meeting.

IIIIIIIIII

Ron kept his expression neutral as the burly secretary showed him into a richly paneled waiting room. The other man's face could have been carved from wood as he indicated that Ron should take a seat.

Ron wasn't alone more than two minutes before the door opened and a hand beckoned for him to enter.

"Thank you for meeting me, Mister Ambassador," Ron said as he walked into the opulent office.

"Please, we haff fought side by side. You may call me Vicky as you did in the old days." The other man motioned for Ron to take a seat.

"I didn't wish to presume," Ron said as he sunk into the chair. "A lot of our old friends from the old days don't want to speak with me anymore."

"They think that you have betrayed Harry. They think that you have become one of the Minister's dogs. They hear that even now you are hunting for our great friend and hero," Victor said, his accent falling away.

"And what do you think, Vicky?" Ron asked with a faint smile.

"I think I should ask you before deciding what to think," Victor replied. "So, please enlighten me."

"I was by Harry's side when we made the final push that took Voldemort. I don't remember much of that night, just flashes, snapshots, the faces of the men I killed. At some point, I got hit by a rather nasty hex or six," Ron sighed.

"And?" Victor prompted.

"And I woke up two weeks after the Ministry declared Harry outlaw and put a reward on his head. I was relearning how to walk and feel pain when Bulgaria declared him a national hero. They didn't even tell me about any of it till weeks later."

"And?"

"And then I found out that my first was on the way and I decided a steady paycheck to keep my wife and child fed was more valuable

than all the pride in the world. I was willing to throw away every friend I had to in order to fill my child's stomach," Ron's voice was as hard as iron. "If there's one thing Harry understood, it's responsibility to one's loved ones. I think that he'd understand if no one else did."

"I too understand, my friend." Victor's face split into a grin. "I knew the man I fought beside could never turn into a Ministry toad. Is that why you wish to find Harry, to explain?"

"No, Harry knew me well enough that I don't think I'd have to. I'm looking for him because the Minister paid me a lot of gold to pass him a message. Enough to move my family far away from here." Ron sighed. "Actually, looking is the wrong term. I'm letting everyone know that I want to speak with him in hopes that word will reach him. Like I told the Minister, I'm not going to be able to find Harry if he doesn't want to be found."

"You are an Auror, is it not your job to find people?" Victor teased.

"It is," Ron agreed. "And I'm very very good at it. However, over the past ten years, Harry's managed to evade; Aurors, bounty hunters, and the best assassins that Malfoy's money can buy. He's a hundred times better at hiding than I am at finding."

"Why not simply take the Minister's money and run?"

"I took the Ministry's coin and I agreed to do the job to the best of my ability," Ron said stiffly. "People have rightfully called me many things over the years, but never a thief."

"Enough of this depressing talk. Let us remember the old days, the days in which I first came to your enchanting land."

"Bit dry to have such a long talk, don't you think, Vicky?" Ron prompted.

"The years have worn your face but your heart is the same!" Victor laughed. "You are right, my friend, our memories are best explored under the influence of strong drink."



Ron awoke from a rather nasty hangover the next morning. A quick wave of the wand cleared away the vomit and several more made him presentable enough for his next meeting. A potion cleared away the nausea and he slipped another for the headache into his pocket, deciding to wait until after his meeting to take it. Chances were he'd have needed another after it anyway.

He walked out of his cottage and took a left down the nearest alley, took another left, and then ran twenty paces before taking another down another alley. He counted a silent ten and stuck out his foot just in time to trip his tail. A grin appeared on his face as he put his foot at the center of the man's back and leaned forward.

"You're breaking my back," the man gasped.

"Tell Luna that I want a meeting," Ron said calmly.

"I don't know what you're . . ." the man howled as Ron ground his heel on one of his captive's vertebrae.

"I'm not going to say it again, tell Luna that I want a meeting. Do you understand?"

"I understand," the man groaned.

"I'll be at the coffee shop two blocks down from my house, tell her I expect to see her in fifteen minutes and that I know some things that she'd like to."

Ron removed his foot and began the short walk to his meeting place. He was a bit annoyed but not a bit surprised to see a familiar looking blonde sitting at his favorite table nibbling on a scone when he arrived.

"Have a seat, Ronald," Luna invited, "I've taken the liberty of ordering your favorite refreshments."

"Nicely done," Ron complimented the girl, enjoying her professionalism. "How hard was it to find a lackey that ham fisted?"

"Not very," Luna replied.

"Do you know why I wanted to speak with you?" Ron asked.

"I expect that you're working off a list of everyone Harry's ever shagged," Luna replied with a grin. "Are you going to speak with Ginny next?"

"Harry shagged Victor?" Ron choked.

"What?" Surprise hit Luna's silvery eyes.

"I talked to Hermione, Victor, and now you," Ron said.

"You're not angry that Harry shagged your ex-fiancée?" Luna prompted with a breezy smile, regaining her bearings.

"Good on 'em, another thing he accomplished that I never did, jest hope he took the opportunity to remove the stick while he was about it. Now about Harry and Victor . . ."

"To the best of my knowledge, they never shagged," Luna admitted, "and the fact that you attended a meeting that I knew nothing about says some uncomfortable things about my surveillance net."

"Or good things about my ability to evade it when necessary," Ron shot back.

"I do not know where Harry Potter is," Luna said with a cheery grin. "What was the information you had for me?"

"The Ministry knows that you're working for the muggles, terms like 'treason' were thrown around when they found out. They wanted me to arrest you."

"What did you do?"

"I pointed out that Voldemort had better security and it didn't save him from Harry and asked if they really wanted to give him that as a reason to come back to the magical world."

"I take it they didn't?" Luna giggled.

"Fairly sure a couple of the bastards went incontinent and I'd say Shack went grey but I can't prove it since the bastard's bald as an egg."

"Enough business," Luna demanded, "How are Lav and the girls?"

"As far away from here as I could get them," Ron replied with a grin. "Oldest'll be starting school fairly soon and . . ."

|||||||

Ginny smiled when she found her brother on the other side of the door. The Weasleys were and remained a close knit family.

"Ron, Luna told me you were going to be here today," Ginny said. "Something about visiting everyone Harry ever shagged . . ."

"Number two on my list was our old pal Vicky," Ron shot back.

"Vic . . . you mean . . . urk." Ginny looked like a fresh caught carp. "Not . . . not that there's anything wrong with that, it's just . . . I never . . . in all the time we dated, I . . ."

"Luna was mistaken, I'm just talking with a few members of the old crew," Ron interjected. "Idea is to get the word out that I want to speak with Harry and why, figure that if no one on my list is still in contact that it's still possible that word of mouth will mean that he still gets the message eventually."

"An Auror of your caliber relying on the power of gossip?" she asked with a raised eyebrow.

"Can you think of a quicker way to relay information?" Ron laughed. "Light's slow in comparison."

"True," Ginny giggled. "So what do you want Harry to know? I'm not going to admit to being in contact with him . . . more that I'm in contact with someone who may be, maybe . . . sort of, I think."

Here's how it could have ended . . .

Harry listened as Ron gave every bit of information he had on the latest Death Eater attack and laid out the Ministry's offer.

"What do you think I should do?" Harry asked.

"I think you should remember what happened the last time you did the Ministry a favor," Ron replied.

"True," Harry agreed, "on the other hand, this isn't something I can allow to let stand." He turned to his second in command. "Luna, deal with it," Harry ordered.

"Yes, Harry," Luna agreed. She turned to the gaping redhead. "Would you care to accompany me, Ronald?"

IIIIIIIIII

Draco's head lolled back and fourth as he tried force himself back to alertness.

"Wake up, cousin Draco," a voice said gently.

"Lvgd?" Draco slurred.

"Yep, it's me, Luna," the voice agreed as a pale face topped by a blonde mop wavered into focus.

"Ged otta m'hus," Draco's firm order dissolved into a confused mumble somewhere between his brain and his mouth.

"In time," she agreed. "You stand convicted of two dozen rapes and thirty two murders, do you have anything to say in your defense?" Her cheerful smile sharpened. "Not that there's any point in it, you were quite talkative when we had you under."

"Hwa?" Draco stared at the woman.

"Guess not." Luna straightened. "Take him."

Draco squealed as two sets of hands yanked him out of his chair and threw him face down onto his desk.

Luna hiked the hem of the struggling man's robe over his back, exposing his bare backside to the world.

"What are you doing?" Ron asked.

"One moment, Ronald," Luna requested. From her pocket she pulled a large bottle of vodka and undid the cap in a practiced motion. "You may wish to look away," Luna warned before jamming the neck of the now open bottle into Draco's unprotected posterior prompting a howl of pain at the unexpected and unprepared penetration.

"Tip him up," Luna ordered. Her minions tilted the struggling man's head down, allowing the bottle to empty itself into his bowels. "You had a question for me, Ronald?" she prompted.

"What are you doing to him?" Ron asked, trying to avoid looking at the spectacle.

"There's no chance of him vomiting it back up this way," Luna explained, "one more pureblood drinks himself to death and no one cares. We paint the walls with his blood and the Ministry will be up in arms, even if they find out why. Was only mudbloods he was killing, no need to take it that far," she finished with a touch of bitterness in his tone.

"Shack wanted Harry to take care of this." Ron held up his hand to silence the woman. "I'd think he'd keep the Ministry off your backs."

"Until the job was finished," Luna agreed. "He's much too pragmatic to loose the hounds before we've dealt with this latest threat to his regime." Luna smirked. "The second it's over, he's got two dozen wands on call to deal with Harry in a very permanent fashion."

"But . . ."

"Welcome to politics, Ron," Luna giggled, "bit like watching sausage get made, isn't it?"

"I knew the bastard was dirty, but . . ." Ron trailed off.

"After the war, after what happened to Harry, a group of like minded individuals got together and decided that with a few exceptions, the wizarding world could go screw. One world down, only thing to do was join the other. We approached the muggles with an offer."

"They accepted and left Harry in charge," Ron finished.

"They handed us to Harry, seems he'd had the same thought a bit earlier," Luna corrected, "our mandate is to keep the problems of the magical world from spilling into ours by any means necessary and to get justice from people like Draco here." Luna nodded to her minions who released the last Malfoy. "We're done here."

"Why are you telling me all this?" Ron asked.

"Do you know where Harry is right now?" Luna asked, changing the subject. "Why he didn't come to deal with Malfoy personally, he wanted to."

"Why?" Ron asked dumbly.

"He's sending Shack a message. Our dear former comrade is going to wake up to find his security team incapacitated, his 'campaign contributions' missing, the worst sickness of his life, and a note written in steam on his bathroom mirror."

"Harry's work," Ron said.

"Afraid I'm not quite up to that level," Luna admitted.

"Harry always was a bit scary," Ron agreed.

"The point is, even after doing this for a few years, we're still a bit short on skilled magic users," Luna said with a raised eyebrow.

"Are you offering me a job?" Ron blurted.

"Are you accepting?"

Here's another way it could have ended . . .

Ron stiffened as he felt a wand poke to the back of the neck.

"My master told me not to kill you," a familiar voice hissed, "but I don't think the punishment will be too bad if I'm careful not to damage you too much."

"Draco," Ron said calmly. At least his family was safe. "I take it your master heard about my search for Harry?"

"He has," Draco agreed coldly. "I'm going to give you a portkey, I suggest that you don't drop it."

Ron felt something smooth get pressed into his palm seconds before he felt a tugging sensation.

"Where are we?" Ron demanded. The portkey had deposited them in a dark windowless room.

"Outside my master's office," Draco replied. He pushed his prisoner towards a blank section of wall. "Just walk towards it, it's like the entrance to the tracks."

It felt like crawling through jello, what he found on the other side shocked Ron to the bone.

"Hello, old friend," the man behind the desk said.

"Hello, Harry," Ron mumbled. "Didn't expect to see you here."

"I heard that you've been looking for me," Harry began. "Have a seat and we'll talk about it."

"One thing first," Ron demanded.

"Shoot," Harry agreed.

"The family that got killed, were you behind it?"

"What do you think?" Harry asked.

"I think that the Harry I grew up with wouldn't have been," Ron replied. "Unfortunately I'm also aware that people change and that I haven't seen you in a very long time . . . hell, the Harry I knew would never have had Malfoy as a minion."

"I haven't changed enough to be party to what happened," Harry assured his old friend.

"What are you doing here, Harry? Why does Draco call you master?"

"Fairly sure that's his sense of humor showing itself," Harry said thoughtfully. "As for what I'm doing . . . well, you've seen how rotted the Ministry is, haven't you?"

"It's the way it's always been," Ron mumbled.

"It is," Harry agreed. "I'm hoping to change that."

"By becoming a Dark Lord?"

"One man's freedom fighter is the Minister's Dark Lord," Harry said with a shrug. "Speaking of the Minister, I'm fairly sure it was him that was behind what happened. They needed an excuse to come after us, we didn't give them one so they provided their own."

"You know what the Minister wants?" Ron asked with a smirk.

"I do," Harry agreed. "Willing to do me a favor for old times sake?"

"Anything, Harry."



"You're planning to resign and join your family overseas?"

"I am," Ron agreed, "I'd like to stay and maybe even help you with this but . . ."

"But that's not what I'm asking you to do," Harry interrupted.

"What do you want?"

"Include a letter from me when you mail in your resignation to the Minister," Harry asked.

"What'll be in it?"

"I'm going to offer to set up a meeting to discuss my fee for taking care of the 'Dark Lord' that has him so frightened," Harry replied. "If he shows up, I'm going to kill him. Hopefully the deaths of the Minister and as many high ranking officials as I can coax to attend the meeting with him will give us the opening we need to knock down the old order."

"You're asking me to be an accessory to murder?"

"Yes," Harry agreed, "I am."

AN: Still in Antarctica, will be for the next six to eight months. That said, it's winter and I'll have wifi and my own room so I should hopefully get back to something resembling my old posting schedule.

Disclaimer: This is my rather poor attempt to answer our own dogbertcarroll's TtH challenge #3389 'Halloween Echoes'. I'd like to say I'm going to do it justice, but I'm afraid lack of familiarity with one of the series will pose a bit of a problem.

## Halloween Echoes

Harry awoke with a start, his eyes danced around the room searching for his opponent, every fiber of his being intent on the bastard's destruction.

"Shit!" he gasped. He got up and began pulling on his clothes as he tried to process the . . . dream? Vision? Whatever it was he'd experienced. Plans upon plans raced through his head for several moments before the boy came to a realization. With a sigh, Harry forced himself to relax, hoping that the new him would at least be likable. "Normal to go through changes at my age," Harry assured himself, "just bloody wish it had happened in the normal way."

With a shrug, Harry put aside his worries in favor of finding a solution to a problem he could deal with. Step one was to get out of his current residence as it contained nothing but Dursleys and bad food, the complete lack of research material was another strike against it.

"Who'd have thought that I'd turn into research boy?" Harry chuckled. "Either of me . . . it's more a job for Hermione . . . I hope she doesn't charge a fee . . . I'm sure it will not be, that Hermione, will charge a fee, to me." The boy smirked. "I'm a poet and I didn't know it."

First things first, Harry walked down to the garage and rummaged around Vernon's unused tools for a bit, setting aside several potentially useful items in his quest to find something that would suit his needs. For a moment, his hand lovingly caressed a billhook before putting it into the keep pile. It's blade needed quite a bit of work and it didn't quite suit his immediate needs. In the end, he was left with a steel wrecking bar and a bag of tools that Vernon would never miss. Time to put the first stage of his plan into motion.

Harry walked up the stairs and to a floorboard he'd spent most of his life avoiding. With a grin of anticipation, he put down his foot and shifted his weight to produce a loud 'squeak' followed by another and another until he heard the sounds of someone moving about.

The door to his Aunt and Uncle's room opened, framing Vernon's bulk for a moment as the fat man allowed his eyes to adjust to the brighter hallway. Petunia was sleeping with Prince Valium so she wouldn't hear a thing.

"You know what happens when you do that, boy," Vernon growled. The fat man cracked his knuckles as he took a menacing step forward. "You knew and you did it anyway, so what happens is on your head."

"I woke you up because we need to have a talk," Harry said calmly, ignoring his Uncle's bluster.

"I'm not in the mood to talk," Vernon said, grinning as he brought up his fists.

"I told myself I wasn't going to enjoy this," Harry said conversationally.

Harry swung the crowbar below the fat man's field of vision and into the bastard's kneecap.

Vernon howled in pain as he went down and continued screaming as Harry added several more hits to the now prone man's flabby body.

"I lied. Do you want to talk now?" Harry demanded, kicking the fat man in the kidney. "Or do you want me to keep convincing you?"

"What do you want?" Vernon screamed, shocked to the bone at the reversal of fortune.

"You're never going to lift a hand to me again, neither is Dudley, and neither is Petunia. If any of you try, I'll bury you and piss on your grave." Harry kicked the bastard in the groin. "Understand?"

Harry watched as Vernon emptied his stomach onto the once pristine carpet. "I asked you a question."

"I understand," Vernon gasped.

"I'm not supposed to use magic out of school," Harry continued. "But I can still do other things and I can still defend myself if you get any bright ideas." Harry kicked the man again. "I think it would be a good idea if you left for a couple weeks, maybe went to visit Marge, I don't care. You don't have to see her but you can't stay here." His foot lashed out and impacted on the man's groin again. "I'm going to go to my room for a few, I don't want any of you to be here when I get out. I'll be gone when you get back, forever."

"Got it," Vernon groaned, shocked beyond belief at how his nephew had changed overnight.

"Oh, and Vernon," Harry paused. "if you ever see me again, I'd suggest you run." The boy continued up the stairs and paused at the door into his room. "Because if I see you again, it'll be the last time."

Vernon thought briefly about the shotgun he kept, fantasized at the look on the boy's face as the trigger was pulled for a moment, before rejecting the idea. If he didn't succeed, the boy would kill him, he had no doubt of that. If he did, there were the police to consider. Even if the courts saw sense and released him, it would still mean the end to his nice normal life. Best to do what the boy said and see if the worthless little twit disappeared. If he didn't, well . . . then it would be time to reconsider his options, wouldn't it? Be better to plan out how to properly dispose of the little bastard first anyway, provide a few pleasant hours of wishful thinking if nothing else.

Mind made up, Vernon went up the stairs to wake up his wife and son. The sooner they were away from the little bastard, the sooner they could finally have a normal life again.

Harry could almost see the thoughts track across the fat man's mind as they occurred. Worst case scenario and he did fail in his first goal, Vernon would have to go. Mind made up, Harry returned to his room for phase two.

"I, Harry James Potter, do not consider this place my home!" he intoned. To the boy's private amazement, it worked, he could feel the wards around the house collapsing, destroying Dumbledore's excuse to ruin his summers.

And now it was time to wait. "Wonder which group of incompetents will notice first?" Harry mused. It would take a bit of time for them to vanish completely, best thing to do was catch a nap so he'd be well rested when the party started.

As it happened, he didn't have to wait long to get his answer.

"Wake up, Harry, we've got to get out of here!" Tonks screamed as she burst into his room.

"What's up, Tonks?" Harry asked with a yawn. "Er, I mean gorgeous pink haired girl I don't know."

"Death Eaters, we've got to get out of here before . . . too late." The woman drooped. "They've got anti-transport wards up. How'd you know my name?" she demanded, realizing what he'd just said.

"Hmmm." Harry glanced out the window. "I don't know what you're talking about, Tonks, I distinctly remember calling you a gorgeous pink haired girl I don't know."

Tonks put the matter out of her mind, figuring that Sirius had mentioned her in his letters or something. She had much more important things to worry about at the moment.

"Only four of them," the boy commented, remaining absolutely calm, one of the key traits that had allowed him to survive his childhood.

"And only two of us," Tonks pointed out. "Here's what we're going to do." She took a deep breath, this was it, this was her time to show that she was true to her salt, to put herself between death and her charge. Tonks silently decided that no matter what price she had to pay, Harry Potter was going to live.

"You put on your cloak, I'll distract them, you run. Understand?" she asked, determination coloring every word. Tonks knew that at best, one of them was going to get out. So be it, she'd show the bastards how an Auror died!

"Mmmmm, no, I don't think we'll be doing that," Harry said absently, showing a complete lack of concern at the situation they'd found themselves in. "How long do you think it'll take them to break down what's left of the wards?"

"Not more than an hour which is why you need to do what I say," Tonks said firmly.

"If I do, you'll die," Harry pointed out. "So we're not going to be doing that. You can feel free to use my cloak if you like, might give you a bit of an edge when they break in."

Ignoring his guest, the boy stripped off his nightclothes and changed into one of the few outfits he had that kinda fit.

"I . . . you . . ." Tonks' jaw worked but no sounds came out.

"I'll be in the kitchen," Harry announced, "my cloak is in my trunk if you want it."

Seeing her charge leave, Tonks snapped out of it and followed after the boy.

"You don't understand, Harry," she said, "my plan is the only chance we have for survival."

"I already pointed out that you'll die if we do it, so it's off the table. Suggest another plan that has a good chance of letting us both live and I'll consider it," he said reasonably.

"I'm an Auror!" Tonks said, trying another tack. "So you will do what I say!"

"No, I won't." Harry reached the kitchen and turned on the stove.  
"Could you pass me that sauce pan, Tonks?"

"This is no time for a snack!" the woman barked.

"If you insist," Harry agreed, "I'm still going to need that sauce pan."

"Fine," Tonks huffed. This was not going the way she'd thought it would. A couple quick spells followed by a heroic death, comforted with the knowledge that she'd taken a couple of the bastards with her and that Harry was safe. This was just . . . odd.

"To the left . . . the other left . . . the other left . . . right, that's the one," Harry agreed, taking it from her. "Thanks."

"I could stun you, you know," she pointed out.

"Then how would I escape?" Harry asked, amused. "Cabinet in front of you has a bottle of oil, could you pass it to me please?" He took it and dumped it into the sauce pan. "It's missing a certain something, isn't it?" Harry scratched his chin. "Sugar in the same cabinet, please pass it to me." The boy dumped the sugar into the pan and stirred it into the hot oil.

"What are you doing?" Tonks asked, coming to the conclusion that the boy might have a trick or two up his sleeve.

"Getting ready," Harry replied. "Willing to consider changing your mind about the invisibility cloak? The only unfair advantage in a fight is the one you don't have."

"Yeah," she agreed, disappearing up the stairs.

While Tonks was gone, Harry selected a couple of large butcher knives from the block and put them on the counter near the stove.

"I'm back," her voice announced.

"Great, just in time," Harry said as the falling wards began to crack.  
"Stay back," he commanded.

"What?"

"Don't get close to the Death Eaters, it would be bad," Harry explained.

"Why do you . . ." She was interrupted by the door flying off its hinges.

"Ready to die, Potter?" the first Death Eater through the door screamed, a stream of drool dripping from the bottom of his mask.

Harry tried and failed to think up something witty to say, choosing to let his actions speak for him. More specifically, the action of flinging the contents of a pot of hot oil and molten sugar into the man's face. Number two got the pan and was distracted enough for Harry to dash across the room, knife in each hand. His hesitation got him four inches of steel in the throat, number three got six in the left kidney.

Tonks managed to fight through her shock long enough to stun the last Death Eater. "Harry, you . . ."

"And now we can leave," Harry announced, twisting the knife. "Would you be so kind as to pack my things while I finish up down here?"

"Finish up?" she asked weakly.

"Just making sure we won't be followed or attacked from behind," he assured her. "It's nothing you need to see," he added gently. Aurors, a little blood and they went all to pieces.

"R-right," she stammered. She left to pack the boy's things and was more than a bit relieved that there was nothing left but a couple of stains when she returned.

"I'm gonna want you or someone else to check out a couple items that recently came into my possession for curses," Harry announced. Best thing about combat was the post fight looting.

"Sure," Tonks agreed weakly. "Let's see 'em."



Harry pulled out a couple rings, and amulet of some sort, and double handful of things one might expect to find in an average wizard's pocket.

"They all look clean," Tonks reported, trying very hard not to think about how the boy had acquired them. "I can tell you that most of it's magical, it'd take me a while to tell you what they all do."

"That can wait, we'd best be off before more company decides to drop by," he prompted.

"Right," Tonks agreed, her voice firming a bit. "We'll go to the edge of the wards they put up and I'll apparate you to Headquarters."

"Wouldn't happen to be Sirius' family home, would it?" Harry asked.

"I can't say," Tonks replied, "it's under a charm."

"Interesting," Harry commented, wondering if his added experiences would let him circumvent the protections.

Harry followed the nervous witch to the edge of the wards and allowed her to take him to the location of the mysterious Headquarters. Which, he was delighted to see that he could see.

"Wait here, I'll be back in a flash to let you in," Tonks said.

"Take your time," Harry said, doing his best to hide how amused he was at the whole thing.

She didn't, Tonks was in and out of the house in less than thirty seconds. The woman walked over where she'd left him and thrust a paper in his face.

"Read!" she ordered.

"Got it," Harry replied.

"Come on, the sooner we've got you safe and under the wards, the happier I'll be." She grabbed him by the wrist and literally dragged the boy into the house.

"Harry!" Sirius said, greeting them with a wide grin. "How you doing, kid?"

"I'm up another four," Harry replied, just as cheerfully. "How you doing, Sirius?"

"Found a spell in the library that'll make Peter's intestines shoot out his bum and strangle him to death," Sirius replied.

"Wicked, do you think you could teach me?"

"Of course," Sirius agreed.

"SIRIUS!" Tonks barked. "That's a dark spell."

"As I was saying before I got so rudely interrupted," Sirius sniffed. "Of course not, that's a dark spell. I only learned it to come up with a counter-spell."

"I'm sorry." Harry looked down at his feet, showing the world an image of contrition. "How bout you teach me a couple useless light spells that won't help me in a fight?"

"Sure," Sirius agreed. They both turned and shot Tonks a pair of horrifyingly similar grins.

"Just . . . just get out of here," she said, looking away.

"Come on, kid," Sirius said. "We'd best be going to the library to learn those useless spells."

"Maybe one that'll help me fluff my pillow," Harry suggested. "That's useless in a fight and is probably more trouble to learn than all the times I'll fluff a pillow combined."

The two retired to the library and made quite a bit of progress before the Order assembled

Sirius did indeed teach him a spell to fluff pillows... in a matter of speaking, though he was quite sure it wasn't a dark spell he was certain that using it on a witch without an engraved invitation would get him killed.

"Anything else you needed, kid?" Sirius asked.

"Access to your library," Harry replied. "I need to research a way to make sure Voldemort stays dead after the next time I kill him."

"Next time?"

"You'd have thought the third time would be a charm," Harry agreed. "I figure I need to either find a way to make it stick or a way to make it so horrible that he doesn't want to come back."

"Sounds like a plan," Sirius agreed. "Come on, I'll explain the way the place is laid out."

Harry was at a desk surrounded by books a few hours later when his concentration was broken by a paper airplane landing on the page he was reading. The second he focused on it, the object unfolded itself to reveal a note asking him to come down to the order meeting to answer a few questions.

"Probably easier to see what they want than it would be to ignore 'em," Harry mused aloud. Probably also a good idea to give his eyes a rest.

Harry ambled down the stairs to the meeting room, making a quick stop in the kitchen for some snacks.

"Thank you for joining us, Harry," Dumbledore said as the boy entered the room. "We were hoping that you could clarify a few things for us?"

"No problem," Harry replied, taking a bite of his sandwich. "Fire away."

"When you said you would . . . uh . . . take care of the Death Eaters, what exactly did you mean?" Dumbledore asked.

"I meant get them medical attention so they could be arrested and either escape or bribe their way out so they could kill, rape, and torture again," Harry replied. "Why, what did you think I meant?" He grinned at the way the order exploded at his statement.

It took Dumbledore several minutes to regain enough order in the Order to say, "You've changed, Harry."

"Being forced into a tournament, watching a fellow competitor get murdered, being forced to take part in a ritual to regain the body of your arch nemesis, and getting tortured tends to change you," Harry agreed. "Not to mention puberty."

"We meant you've changed in that you seem to have acquired a few abilities you did not possess before," Dumbledore clarified.

"Oh." Harry's expression turned solemn. "That."

"Yes," Dumbledore agreed gravely, "that."

"The war was going badly," Harry whispered, his eyes haunted, "we were losing, we were desperate." The boy gave a hollow laugh. "We came up with a plan so brilliant and insane that it had no chance of working, only . . . it did."

"You sent yourself back in time," Dumbledore gasped, eyes widening in understanding. "The audacity of such a plan and the risks associated with it are . . ." the man trailed off, unable to think up a word or even a dozen that would suffice.

"Nah, I'm just fuckin' with you," Harry laughed. "I can't believe you all bought that."

You could have heard a pin drop, every witch and wizard was staring at the boy, their faces frozen into a rictus of shock.

Harry took one last bite of his sandwich, then shrugged. Looked as if the question and answer session was over and he had research to do. After all this was over, he wasn't going to so much as touch a book for at least a week . . . maybe two.

He hadn't really gotten a chance to get back into it when Sirius appeared with a giant grin on his face to state the obvious.

"Harry, you pranked the entire Order," Sirius said.

"Yeah?"

"I'm . . . I'm so proud," Sirius pulled the boy into a hug. "MY GODSON PRANKED DUMBLEDORE!"

"Are you crying?" Harry asked oddly.

"Rubbed an onion in my eyes before I came out," Sirius said, brushing away a tear.

"Why'd you do that?"

"Because manly blokes like me don't cry of course." And because Poppy had refused to cauterize his tear ducts. "But they do sometimes rub onions in their eyes for no reason at random times like right after their godson pranks the second . . . third greatest wizard in the United Kingdom."

"What about Moony?"

"Moony never lost his virginity to a pair of busty twins or pranked Dumbledore," Sirius replied.

"Oh. Twins, huh?"

"Busty twins," Sirius corrected.

"What'd they look like other than that?"

"You're getting lost in the details, Harry. All you need to know is twins, busty twins," Sirius said, lost in a happy memory.

"Fine," Harry agreed. "You want to do some godfather and godson bonding?"

"Sounds girly," Sirius said suspiciously.

"Really? Cause it sounded like a good way of getting the order off our backs when you teach me how to ride a motorcycle, unless of course you don't want to," Harry added. "Suppose I could just stay here . . . with these books. I'd thought riding a motorcycle would help me with the witches, but if you don't want to . . ."

"Harry, stop," Sirius interrupted. "Of course I'll teach you and of course we'll use that excuse with the order." The man grinned. "I'll also teach you the other things every bloke needs to know how to do."

"Like what?"

"Like belch loud enough to rattle windows and how to play cards and well, lot's of things," Sirius replied. "My duty as your godfather to teach you the things your parents never would have wanted you to learn."

"What about the things they would want me to learn?" Harry asked.

"That's your godmother's job," Sirius replied.

"I have a godmother?"

"Nah, it's just what I call Remus when he starts whinging about teaching you responsible things," Sirius laughed. "Let's go."

They returned to the house after a short lesson on how to ride a motorcycle and a long police chase that racked up millions of pounds of damage to find that the Order had reassembled and still wanted answers.

"Fine," Harry agreed with a world weary sigh. "You really want to know? On your heads be it then, it won't be my fault if your fragile little minds shatter under the weight of the knowledge I'm about to impart. God knows mine barely survived the first time I discovered... the truth."

"If anyone wishes to leave, now is the time to do it," Dumbledore intoned. "As Harry said, if you can not accept what he has to say, you have none to blame but yourselves if you stay."

Shame faced, three members of the Order stood and walked out of the room, each secure in the knowledge of their own weakness and that it was sometimes better to remain in ignorance than to get even a fragment of an awful truth.

"You may begin, Harry," Dumbledore said seriously.

"Well, ever since I was a kid, I got these . . . flashes of someone else's life. After Voldemort got resurrected, they became stronger and I realized that the life I was seeing was his." Harry's gaze swept over the room. "I have access to his thoughts, his power, his memories. I know what he's going to do and I know how to stop him."

"Something that will prove invaluable in our fight against the dark," Dumbledore said seriously.

"Yes, I . . ." Harry burst into laughter. "I can't do this anymore, I got you again. Seriously, reading his mind, this is even less plausible than the whole time travel story."

Dumbledore shot a disappointed look at Fawkes as he fell off his perch laughing along with Harry and Sirius.

"Okay, seriously, the truth is that . . ." The Order leaned forward in expectation causing Harry to burst into another fit of laughter. "The

looks on your faces, I can't do this." Tears streaming down his face, the boy stumbled out of the room and into his second favorite pair of twins at Hogwarts.

"Oi!" Fred barked.

"Who you callin' second favorite?" George agreed.

"Didn't know I was saying that out loud," Harry admitted. "And you're a distant second behind the Patils, sorry guys but I just don't think about the two of you at night when . . ."

"We get the picture," George interrupted.

"No need to go into any detail," Fred agreed.

"We understand completely that you prefer witches to wands," George stated.

"Tacos to hotdogs-"

"-tuna to . . ."

"Enough," Harry said firmly. "We've got business to discuss."

"We do?"

"Well let's get started."

"Fred, George," Harry had a serious look on his face. "I need a favor from you."

"Anything-"

"-Harry."

Harry glanced around to make sure they weren't being overheard before getting to business. "You've seen how closely the Order's watching me, makes it a bit difficult for a bloke to step out to get some much needed supplies." Not that he couldn't escape, but it would



close off the holes he'd found in their security and then he couldn't use that route for something more important.

"What do you need?"

"-Harry?"

Harry pulled a roll of pounds he'd found on one of the Death Eaters.  
"Well . . ."

The twins listened to Harry's request and immediately agreed to it. They owed him too much to say no, even if it should cost them their lives they would get him the items that every teenage boy needed to survive!

They were back within the hour, carrying large but discreet brown shopping bags, and sporting looks of almost religious awe on their faces.

"Here you are, Harry."

"Thanks for telling us about that place-"

"-forget the joke shop, we'll make a mint just reselling this stuff to everyone at Hogwarts."

"Why not have both?" Harry suggested. "Or use the joke shop as cover for your real business."

"You're a genius-"

"-Harry. We promise, we won't forget what you showed us today."

"We promise, we'll find a way to repay you for it. You've changed our lives, Harry!" one said with a look of bliss, as if he was staring at an unbelievably bright future.

"No problem, guys, now go forth and make your dreams come true," Harry commanded.

Sirius brushed past the twins as they rushed out of the room.

"What's with them?"

"Showed them one of the wonders of the muggle world," Harry replied. "What's up, Sirius?"

"Dumbledore sent me here to get the real story from you," Sirius replied, snagging the top magazine off of Harry's newly acquired stack of porn. "Figured that as your godfather, I could use my godfatherlyness to weasel my way into your confidence to pry it outta you or something."

"You really want me to tell you?"

"And spoil your joke? Never!" Sirius laughed. "Go against the Marauder code to spoil another Marauder's joke."

"I'm a Marauder?"

"A legacy," Sirius agreed, eyes still locked on the magazine.

"Oh." Harry shrugged, whatever. "There was something I wanted to talk with you about."

"What is it?" Sirius asked, flipping a page.

"Where were you hiding before you came back for the tournament?"

"Brazil, they don't have an extradition treaty on the magical side and the beaches have . . ." He shuddered. "It's not something I can describe, it's something you have to see for yourself."

"Why not go back?"

"Can't leave you alone here with Voldemort, wouldn't be right," Sirius said, closing the magazine and looking the boy in the eyes. "So long as that bugger is drawing breath, I'll be here watching your back so long as I'm drawing breath. The beach birds 'll have to wait."

"Noble," Harry said, forming an argument. "But maybe not as productive setting up a bolt hole and keeping the escape route open."

"What do you mean?" Sirius put the magazine back onto the stack.

"How'd the Ministry do against the Death Eaters last time?" Harry asked.

"Not so well," Sirius admitted. "Truth is, we were losing badly when you got the bugger the first time."

"How well do you suppose they'll do now, after Lucius bloody Malfoy has had a few years to get things ready?"

"Voldemort'll have the place in an afternoon," Sirius said, turning pale.

"Which is why I need someplace safe to run to," Harry finished.

"I'm not leaving you, Harry," Sirius said firmly.

"Alright," Harry agreed. "Tell me who else I can trust to do this for me, someone that won't let something slip to Dumbledore before they go."

"Remus . . . no." Sirius' shoulders drooped. "He'd talk, wouldn't he?"

"No one else has the perfect combination of trustyness, loyalty, ability, and willingness to trust a teenager over the so called greatest wizard of our time."

"You've convinced me," Sirius said sourly.

"Be sure to have enough gold moved with you so that it doesn't matter if the goblins fold," Harry advised.

"I've done this before," Sirius laughed. "Leave everything to me."

"Thanks, Sirius. Sorry to cut you out, but there really isn't anyone else I can trust to do this for me."

Sirius put a hand on the boy's shoulder. "Something happens to you, I'll be back here before you know it and taking stupid risks."

"I'd better not let anything happen to me," Harry agreed.

"Good."

"I'm sorry, Sirius, but there really wasn't anyone else I could turn to. You know there's no one I'd rather have at my back in a fight, right?"

"I know, kid," Sirius sighed. "Don't have to like it, but I'll do what has to be done."

"You're imagining the beaches, aren't you?" Harry accused.

"I was thinking the safe house could overlook one of 'em," Sirius agreed, a goofy grin on his face.

"I'll distract the Order for you while you pack and go," Harry offered.

"No need," Sirius replied. He ambled down the stairs into the meeting room. "I'm going back on the lam, see you later. Oh, and Harry agreed to finally tell you the truth about what happened to him."

All eyes shifted from Sirius to Harry, anticipation filling each and every one.

"Well, Harry?" Dumbledore prompted.

"Reincarnation," Harry said, doing his damndest to keep his voice level. "The truth is, I . . . I . . . excuse me for one second." He stepped out of the room and closed the door before howling with laughter. Once he'd regained control, he stepped back into the room to continue. "As I was saying, I'm the tenth incarnation of a Japanese warrior wizard named Chinkage Manko, the greatest of all that ever lived and . . ."

"We heard you laughing," Tonks interrupted, "we don't buy it."

"Would you believe, second greatest warrior wizard?" Harry asked with a smirk.

"I don't think so," Tonks replied.

"How bout a second rate sushi merchant?" Harry said, lips twitching.

"No, Harry," Tonks replied.

"How about this one? The truth is that I don't trust any of you enough to tell you," Harry said calmly. "We've got Professor dickweasel over there ready to run off and tell Voldemort, Mister sticky hands." He glared at Dung. "Waiting to sell it to the highest bidder and let me add that if you don't replace everything you've stolen, I'll cut your hands off."

"Harry!" Dumbledore barked.

"Fine, right hand for the first offense and head for the second," Harry agreed. "If I may continue?" He looked around, there were no objections. "And aside from the two notable firsts, we've got a whole crowd of people I don't even know. Even leaving that aside, why in the hell would I want to tell you all? There's only one way two people can keep a secret, think on that."

The Order began shouting as Harry left the room. He really needed to calm down. Flying was out, so he found a bit of scrap wood and a carving knife. Fifteen wooden stakes later and he'd regained a bit of his center and managed to prepare a bit for his first vampire hunt.

To the boy's private amazement, his speech to the Order seemed to have done the trick of getting them to leave him alone for a couple of days. Having had time to process what had happened greatly lessened the feeling that he was being overwhelmed, it (paired with a rare moment of quiet) meant that Harry had time to get started on one of his new pet projects.

It didn't take long to find the billhook he'd liberated from the Dursley family. It was a Newton pattern, meaning it was about five hands long

and shaped like the hooked beak of some predatory bird. The inside curve of the blade was indifferently sharpened and the outside was typically blunt. In short, with a bit of work it had the potential to be a devastating close quarters weapon.

The first thing he did was remove layers of grime and rust it had acquired as a result of sitting for years at the back of the Dursley's shed. There was something about physical work that makes a job well done more satisfying than magic ever could, Harry thought to himself. The boy paused, wondering who had originated the thought. Things had been a lot easier when he hadn't had a skullmate.

Blade rust free, Harry was about to set off in search of a sharpening stone when someone began pounding on his door.

"Come in," Harry called out.

The door opened to admit his bushy haired best friend. The girl paused for a moment to give him a once over before coming closer to give a more thorough inspection.

"They told me you got attacked, you didn't get hurt, did you?" the girl asked anxiously.

"I'm fine," Harry assured her.

"Are you really?" she asked. "They also said that you've been acting strange ever since you got back. Is . . . are you having nightmares about what you had to do?" She knew she would have and Tonks had admitted that she was having trouble sleeping after witnessing the massacre in the Dursley's parlor. "How are you sleeping?"

"Better than I normally do," Harry said honestly.

"Harry, what happened?" Hermione asked softly. She knew that there was something off about her friend, she just wasn't sure what.

"Did they send you to find out?" Harry dodged the question, voice colored with annoyance. "Did Dumbledore send you up here to spy

on me? Are you going to skip down and regurgitate everything I tell you?"

"Bugger 'em, you're my friend and I want to know what really happened to you, Harry Potter?" Hermione demanded. If asking nice didn't work, she'd try doing it the other way. "So talk!"

Harry started to open his mouth, a wicked gleam in his eye when Hermione continued.

"And I don't want to hear some stupid story like the ones you've been telling everyone else, I want the truth," she insisted.

"Promise to keep it to yourself?" Harry asked, trying to regain control of his emotions. Looked like he hadn't gotten as much of a handle on them as he'd thought.

"Of course," Hermione agreed immediately, "I'd never reveal your secrets without your permission, you know that."

"Then you're going to have to raid the spice cupboard for me," Harry replied, "I'll also need a good sharp, unenchanted knife, an unenchanted bowl, a flat slab of stone or a piece of unenchanted parchment, two cups of fresh spring water, and a bottle of whiskey. Note, I said whiskey, not fire whiskey, Kentucky bourbon if you can get it. Nothing can have any magical residue at all."

"Why do you need all that, Harry?" Hermione asked, puzzled by the requirements. It looked like she was going to have to make a quick trip to the neighborhood grocer.

"You won't know until after you get it for me," Harry replied with an infuriating smirk. "Oh, before I forget, I'll also need something from the muggle world."

"What?" As if she'd have been able to get any of the other things from a wizarding shop.

Another wicked gleam appeared in the boy's eye.

The Order didn't question Hermione when she told them she had to nip out to the corner shop, figuring that the muggle born had to do some mysterious muggle thing that properly bred witches and wizards were better off knowing nothing about.

She returned an hour later, burdened by a couple of heavy packages and went directly back to the room her best friend had claimed for himself.

"I'm back and I want answers," Hermione announced as she stepped through the door.

Harry stared at the box in the witch's hands as if it held the secret of eternal happiness, which in a way, for him at least, it did. He set aside his project in favor of giving the box his full attention.

"Did you get them?" he asked, entranced.

"A whole case, just for you," Hermione agreed. "You won't believe what I had to go through to get them. Now talk!"

Hands trembling, he reached out to take the case, only to have it snatched out of his reach.

"Box later, answers now!" Hermione insisted.

"Do you have the other stuff?" Harry asked, his mouth dry, his entire attention still captivated by the object in the witch's hands.

"Yeah," Hermione agreed. "Why do you need it?"

"Privacy and to make sure you won't be able to reveal what you're about to learn," Harry explained.

"I promised, didn't I?"

"You did, but promises to keep secrets don't mean a whole lot when there are mind readers in the house," he pointed out.



"Mind . . . who?"

"Precautions before answers," he insisted. "I'll start you off if you give me . . ."

"Answers first, snacks after," Hermione growled, sticking to her guns.

"I could just take them from you, you know," he grumbled.

"Harry Potter using force on me?" Hermione giggled, unable to keep a straight face. "You don't have it in you."

"I could, you know. I've got loads more experience fighting than you do."

"But you won't," Hermione said smugly. "You're much too sweet."

"Fine." His shoulders sagged in defeat. "Take out the bowl, pour the water in and add the spices."

"Then what?" she asked after she'd followed his instructions.

"Cut yourself and bleed into it, back of your hand is one the better places," he advised. "Pour a bit of the whiskey over your cut into the bowl and give me the knife."

Harry cut the back of his own hand and poured a bit of whiskey over the cut and into the bowl. Then he chanted a few words, causing the whole thing to flash white.

"What did we just do?" Hermione asked, blinking the spots out of her eyes.

"Modified marriage ceremony," Harry said absently, drawing something on the parchment, using his blood as the ink.

"MARRIAGE?" Hermione squeaked.

"Modified, we're as single as we were five minutes ago in the eyes of magic and the law," Harry assured the girl, "Black family used it to

keep business partners from leaking secrets. You literally can't reveal any of the secrets I'm going to reveal to you."

"Oh." The girl visibly calmed. "No offense, it's just . . ."

"I'm not even close to being ready either," Harry assured her, "be happy to jump into sex at any time, but marriage can wait."

"Harry!" Hermione admonished, swatting him on the arm.

"Done," he said, making the last stroke on the parchment. "And now we won't be overheard."

"Where did you learn how to do these things?" Hermione demanded.

"The Black family has a very good library which includes a book on how to do magical things without magical ingredients," Harry explained.

"How is that possible?" Hermione asked.

"It's the blood, should have said without any magical ingredients other than what you produce yourself. It's also considered quite dark and restricted by the Ministry so it's naturally one of the things I'd rather you didn't talk about with other people," Harry said. And thanks to the little ritual they'd just performed, she wouldn't.

"Okay, now let's have it, Harry Potter, the truth about what happened to you."

"I did promise to give it to you, didn't I?" Harry sighed, stalling a bit.

"You did," she agreed firmly.

"The truth is that I went to bed and woke up wearing someone else's body in a demon infested town in California," Harry said.

"You promised me the truth, Harry Potter!" Hermione growled.

"And I gave it to you, not my fault that it's less believable than the lies I've been telling the Order." Harry shrugged. "Someone in the town had cast a spell of some sort that turned people into their costumes and someone had dressed as . . ."

"You," Hermione deduced.

"Yep," Harry agreed. "I spent the night keeping my host alive and protecting a couple girls, then I woke up back in my bed as if nothing had happened. Only it did and my host left a bit of himself behind." Harry wondered if he'd left a bit also, he hoped it'd be useful if he had.

"Harry, we have to contact him and see if . . ."

"We can't," Harry said. "Not now anyway, maybe in a few years, but not until we've figured out how. Hell, we may never figure out how."

"Why not?"

"My host didn't dress up as me because I'm the 'boy-who-lived' he dressed up me because I was a character in a popular book series. How does it feel to be fictional, Hermione?"

"Oh." The girl looked startled. "What happens to us?"

"I'd like to think that free will plays a part here, so I'll say that I don't know," Harry replied.

"So, books. How did they turn out?"

"For one, you'll be happy to hear that we were a rather popular series, made billions of pounds on people that regarded my life as light entertainment," Harry replied. "You have to understand that a lot of this is tainted by his perceptions . . ."

"Of course," she agreed, understanding how much a person's preconceptions could color their view of the world.

"In the books, we survived the war with Voldemort, the world went back to normal minus the hundreds of muggleborn that were

exterminated, no one was punished, and we both fell into unhappy marriages, possibly with the aid of a love potion. Malfoy got a happy ending, the Weasleys got a moderately happy ending, the ones that survived anyway, we got shit on. World wasn't just fucked, it was proper fucked."

"Language," Hermione said automatically. "Who did we marry?"

"Ron for you, Ginny for me. I named one of my children after Snape which gives you an idea of how bad it got," Harry commented. "Then there was the internet and a thousand other ideas on how things could have went; ranging from horror to harem to horrible harem."

"Harem?" she giggled.

"They had us both with every wizard and witch you can imagine. My host's best friend was rather fond of you and Luna together with me." Possibly because it gave her a chance to read about two girls together without having to admit a few things about herself, or possibly because it let the brainy girl have the hero in addition. Having an outsider's perspective of an insider's view was tremendously insightful. He wondered what his host thought of his life.

"Ravenclaw the year behind us?" she asked uncertainly, the bridge of her nose wrinkling in thought. Even as small as the student population at Hogwarts was, the house system made it rather difficult to get to know students from different houses, especially if they were in different years.

"Yes, someone we should probably get to know even if we don't both decide to fall into a sinful relationship with her," Harry agreed.

"Harry!" she squeaked.

"She was a very good friend in the books," Harry explained. "I'd be happy if she's half as good in real life."

The two friends stared at each other for a few minutes, neither knowing quite where to take the conversation.

"Me and her together, huh?" Hermione asked weakly. To be honest, while the thought of dating another witch had crossed her mind, the thought of dating a witch and a wizard at the same time had never occurred to her. "Were we happy?"

"In the stories, yes. Would it work in real life?" Harry shrugged. "They also wrote stories about me and Draco, me and Snape, me and Voldemort, and you with all three at the same time. I don't see that working out."

"Oh. What do you think, Harry?"

"You're asking a teenage boy what he thinks of dating two beautiful girls at the same time?" Harry asked with a raised eyebrow. "Really?"

"Never mind," Hermione said with a blush. The blush deepened when she realized that he'd just called her beautiful.

"In addition to leaving behind a couple things, my host strengthened a few traits I already have . . . had . . . whatever. Important thing is my libido is also quite a bit higher than it was, it thinks having a harem is a marvelous idea. My more practical side isn't sure and is terrified of doing or saying anything that would lose you as a friend."

"Direct." She felt warm inside at his admission.

"I promised to tell you the truth," Harry replied. "And the truth is I'd jump at the chance for some fun of the horizontal sort. But, as I said before, not at the risk of losing you as a friend."

"Oh, thank you, Harry," she murmured, turning a deep red.

"No problem, Hermione. Did you want to know anything else?"

"Who . . . what were you?"

"I was a soldier in a war as old as humanity, one of the few volunteers in an army of conscripts," Harry replied. "A man willing to do anything to keep humanity at the top of the food chain. I never

really considered how scary and all encompassing the word anything was before."

The girl shivered. "Top of the food chain?"

"The world . . . his world was filled with monsters that regarded humans as a good source of food, he was part of a group that killed them." Harry paused. "The only member of the group that considered it an honor, the only member that didn't consider it a chore or a duty." Quite the contrary, his host had regarded it as a pleasure.

"Were you able to learn anything from our books?" Hermione asked, hoping to change the subject to something that wouldn't produce such a horrible look of glee on her friend's face.

"I know a bit about a few things that may or may not happen to us, I know that Ron tends to get angry and storm off whenever things get a bit difficult and I'm not sure if the fact that he'll always return after he cools off makes up for that . . ."

"Harry, Ron's not that bad," Hermione said, looking away.

"I'm not saying that we should stop being friends with him," Harry said gently, "just making a few observations."

"Al . . . alright," she agreed hesitantly.

"I know that you'll stick with me no matter what," Harry continued with a fond smile that matched the blush on the girl's face. "I have a new appreciation for research, a new attitude on how to deal with Death Eaters, a few weapons skills, and a newly found love of god's own snack cake. I can only hope that my host got half as much as I did, least I can do to repay him for what he gave me."

"Fine, you can have one," Hermione agreed. The girl opened the box and tossed a cellophane wrapped package to her best friend.

Harry snagged it out of the air, opened the package, and crammed the golden snack cakes into his mouth one after the other with a look of bliss on his face.

"What else did you learn?" Hermione demanded.

"A hundred possibilities," Harry replied. "I know who our Defense Professor is this year." And the bitch wasn't going to last a week before he put her in the ground. "I know a few students we might want to get to know better, I know why Voldemort came after me, and I know who put him on their trail." Another name on his list.

"What are we gonna do, Harry?" Hermione asked.

Harry snagged another snack cake while the girl was distracted. "We're going to win, Hermione," he replied as if it were a foregone conclusion.

Hermione waited until his friend had finished devouring the cellophane wrapped goodness before she asked her next question.

"Why do you keep making up all those crazy stories?"

"Two reasons, the first is that it's fun," Harry replied.

"And the second?"

"If you can't dazzle them with brilliance, blind them with bullshit, the Lovegood family motto . . . well, maybe," Harry said. "If I'm able to confuse the issue enough, it won't matter what I let slip."

"The truth is so precious it must be guarded at all times by a bodyguard of lies?" Hermione suggested.

"Same idea conveyed in a different way," Harry agreed. "Appropriate quote considering what we're going to have to do."

"I thought so," Hermione agreed.

"What changes have you noticed about me?" Harry asked, curious to hear an outsider's perspective.

"You're much more relaxed, you're much more willing to joke around, and you're much much more direct," Hermione listed off a couple things. "At your core, you're still Harry Potter, just . . . just more in some ways and with additions in others." She reached over to give him a hug. "Thank you for sharing this with me, Harry."

"No problem," Harry replied inhaling her scent and barely resisting the urge to nip at her collar bone before she released him. "Um, do you mind if I ask your help with something, Hermione?"

"What?" Hermione asked.

"Research," Harry replied. "We've only got a limited amount of time with the Black library. I'm trying to find anything that can help me defeat Voldemort. I'm particularly interested in alchemy, enchantment, and wards, but any combat or defensive magic will do. Two people could cover more ground than one, so if you don't mind . . ."

"Of course I'll help, Harry," Hermione said. "You only had to ask."

"Thank you, Hermione."

"What're friends for, Harry."

Hermione bowed out of the search shortly after dark, stating that she needed to get a bit of sleep but Harry continued until well after midnight. He'd uncovered a couple interesting things that would help with his current pet project and did not wish to let go until he'd followed the trail to its conclusion.

Hermione was waiting outside Harry's door when he emerged the next morning and nearly forgot what she had wanted to say. He was wearing grey tweed plus fours, a grey tweed waistcoat, a grey tweed hacking jacket, and it was all topped off by a matching grey tweed flat cap. She'd never seen him in an outfit like he was wearing, she'd never expected to see him in an outfit like that.

"Where did you find that, Harry?" Hermione asked, holding back a snicker.



"Ordered it," Harry replied. "Had 'em layer a few comfort charms on it and a few more to make it more durable, I also got a few more in different colors. Why, did you want to get something similar for yourself?"

"Tweed, Harry?" Hermione asked, taking in the boy's new outfit. It was becoming harder and harder to hold in her laughter, looked as if wizarding fashion sense had claimed another victim.

"Yes," Harry agreed, "and for two very practical reasons."

"You're planning to drop out of Hogwarts to be a gamekeeper?" she suggested, eyes filled with mirth. "Does poor Hagrid know that you're threatening his position?"

"No. The first is a joke, it's always good to be able to laugh at yourself, if you can't do that then you have no business laughing at other people. Something I could never give up, what with the wizarding world being filled with the sorts it is. More important is the second, because my host wouldn't be caught dead in this outfit, lets me hang on to being me." Harry brushed his hand against the jacket. "Not that what he left behind is trying to take over or anything, it's just . . . I can't really explain the feeling of waking up and not being sure of who you are, even if it fades in a heartbeat it's very disconcerting. Tweed may not be me but it's more me than it could ever be him."

"Well I think it looks good on you," the girl said, changing tracks. "Makes you look like a country lord. Much better than those horrid clothes you got from the Dursleys."

"So we'll have the Dark Lord, the Light Lord, and the Country Lord all facing each other in a fight to determine the fate of the magical world?"

"I know which one I'd prefer," she said, brushing a bit of invisible lint off his lapel.

"I presume you had a reason to wait up for me?" he prompted.

"I did," she agreed, smoothing down his collar.

"Well?"

Hermione gave the outfit one last pat before meeting his gaze. "I don't think you're going to like it, Harry."

"I don't like a lot of things, doesn't mean I have the luxury of remaining ignorant about them. Let's have it, Hermione."

"They're talking about doing something to keep you out of the library while they go through it and remove all the books that they don't deem to be appropriate," Hermione told him.

"Which would be most of them," Harry said, scratching his chin. "How'd you hear about this?"

A faint blush dusted the girl's cheeks. "There may or may not be an air vent in my room."

"Which you may or may not be listening to," Harry laughed. "Good on you, Hermione."

"What are you going to do, Harry?"

The boy closed his eyes for a bit. "They're going to have an awfully big surprise when they try something."

"Sirius gave you control over the wards before he left," Hermione said in delight.

"Did he?" Harry gave her a grin. "Still, it's only a temporary solution. I can stop them when they try but they'd, or rather Bill shouldn't have too much trouble getting around what I did. Suppose I could Kill Bill." His lips twitched, all he needed was a yellow track suit. "But then I'd still have Dumbledore to contend with and I'm sure the Weasley family would be rather cross."

"Yeah," Hermione agreed.

"Guess I'll have to think of a bone to throw Dumbledore or a way to move the library someplace safe." Pity he couldn't trust the goblins, or could he? How accurate were those stories anyway and what could he do to test it? Damn it, things were so much simpler in the stories than they were in real life.

Harry accompanied his friend to the library and got in a few hours of good research before the Order blundered in, Bill in the lead accompanied by a couple of wizards whose names Harry hadn't bothered to learn.

"Something I can help you with?" Harry asked.

"We're just here to remove some of the less savory books," Bill said cheerfully. "Don't mind us."

"No," Harry said calmly. "I don't think you'll be doing that, please show yourselves out."

"I'm afraid it's not that simple, Harry," Bill said, face showing every sign of regret. "Dumbledore's orders."

In response, Harry surged the wards as he rose to his feet, wand in hand. "Care to give me another answer, Bill?"

"Neither of you make a move," Bill ordered to his companions, voice deadly serious. "You don't have to do this, Harry."

"I rather think I do," Harry replied. "You didn't want to talk, which leaves the alternative. Hermione, please be a dear and go get Professor Dumbledore. The old man and I need to have a discussion."

"Do you want our wands, Harry?" Bill asked after the girl had left.

"I probably should," Harry said. "But I'm hoping we can resolve this in a civilized manner. If not-" The boy shrugged.

"What's he talking about?" one of the anonymous wizards asked.

"He has control over the wards," Bill explained. "He has control and we're under them, while they're up, he has a very large advantage if something happens."

"You're the ones that refused to talk," Harry said. "Ah, the man of the hour has arrived," Harry said, the wards informing him that the head of the Order was on the other side of the door. "Come in, Headmaster!"

"Is this really necessary, Harry?" Dumbledore asked, looking very disappointed.

"Your side refused to talk," Harry replied.

"I wasn't aware that we were on different sides, Harry."

"Tell me, Headmaster, what were you planning to do with the books after you stole them from the Black Library?"

"I'd hardly call what they were doing theft," Dumbledore said, trying to inject a tone of humor in his voice.

"Really?" Harry asked in mock surprise. "What would you call taking objects without their owner's consent if not theft?"

"Confiscation maybe?" Dumbledore suggested. "They really are too dangerous to be left out."

"You were going to 'permanently confiscate' several items without their owner's consent, what were you planning to do with them after that?"

"Some were to be destroyed, others were to be put to better use," Dumbledore admitted.

"How about this, I will allow you to 'permanently confiscate' these books if in return you and the other members of the Order allow me to 'permanently confiscate' most of the gold in your vaults, does that work for you, Professor?" Harry grinned. "That way no one else can accuse you of being a common thief."

"You do know that we are only acting in your best interests, don't you, Harry?"

"I could probably be persuaded that you think that," Harry said thoughtfully. "But, I'm also sure that someone of your vast experience has heard the saying about how they pave the road to hell."

"Why don't we leave aside the issue of the library for the time being?" Dumbledore suggested. "With the promise that the next time we revisit it, we shall do nothing without your knowledge and consent?"

"I can agree to that," Harry said. "How often does one get a chance to find out if a great wizard's word is good. The loss of the Black library might even be worth the price of knowing that it was worth nothing."

"Harry, what happened to you?" Dumbledore asked softly.

"You want to know what happened to me? I've got a fragment of Voldemort's." He paused to let the Order members recover from their flinch. "Soul stuck in my scar."

Dumbledore choked. "How . . . how did you acquire that piece of information, Harry?"

"I . . . I . . ." Harry began giggling. "Come on, that's the least believable one yet. You of all people should know that. Remember how I beat him my first year? Blood protection would have fried it to a crisp."

"Are we done here, Professor?" Bill asked.

"We are," Dumbledore agreed.

"Mind if we leave, Harry?" Bill turned his attention to the house's master.

"Alright, but feel free to stay if you want to look something up Hell, you can feel free to return if you ever need to look something up, " Harry added. "You can come in now, Hermione, we're finished."

Bill's eyes bulged when he saw the girl waiting in the door behind them with her wand drawn, the tension in her right arm and shoulder saying she was more than ready to act. "You have very good friends, Harry."

"I know," Harry said, beaming at the girl.

Hermione beamed back, blushing faintly at the compliment.

"Thank you for your time, Harry, and please do an old man a favor, just to set my mind at ease," Dumbledore requested.

"What is it, Professor?"

"Please avoid the books on that shelf over there, they're rather badly cursed and I'm afraid Poppy would be quite put out with both of us if we had to call her in to heal you."

"I have no objection to that request, Headmaster, I also have no objections to you or someone else checking over any books I'm not sure about before I read them," Harry agreed.

"Something Sirius was good enough to do for you before he left, I presume?" Dumbledore asked.

"I have a very good store of relatively safe reading material," Harry agreed.

"I should have known." Dumbledore shook his head. "Thank you for your time, Harry. I'm glad we were able to begin to solve some of our differences."

Harry waited until after he was sure they were alone before opening his mouth to speak. "That's the Dumbledore I know," he said thoughtfully.

"So?" Hermione replied, looking up from the large book in her lap.

"It's not the Dumbledore my host thought he knew, of course that Dumbledore was a master manipulator and able to fool everyone so I suppose I should take that observation with a grain of salt," Harry admitted.

"Your host didn't like Dumbledore?" Hermione squeaked. "Why?"

"Like I said, he thought the Headmaster was a sinister figure manipulating things from behind the scenes. That or a senile old man," Harry said. "I wish I knew what he was."

Hermione shot him a sympathetic look, not knowing how to respond to that.

"I guess it doesn't matter," Harry continued. "The safest thing is to expect the worst and be pleasantly surprised if it doesn't happen."

"Yeah," Hermione agreed.

Harry stood up, popping his back. "I need a break," he announced. "I also need some help with something so I'm going to go speak with Remus. Hold down the fort while I'm gone."

"Alright, Harry," she agreed.

Harry left the Black family library in search of the Order's resident werewolf. He found the man in the sitting room watching the floo and listening to the wireless.

"What's up, Remus?" Harry greeted the man.

"Keeping an eye on the floo in case someone has an emergency," Remus replied. "Heard you had an argument with Dumbledore earlier."

"A small difference of opinion," Harry corrected. "He thought he was in charge of looking out for my welfare, I thought I was."

"You can't just expect us to sit by while you endanger yourself, Harry," Remus sighed.

"You can't expect me to sit by and watch the library get robbed," Harry shot back. "The key to killing Voldemort could be in one of those books."

"Dealing with him shouldn't be your job," Remus said.

"No, it shouldn't be," Harry agreed. "And it won't be three seconds after I figure out a way to make the world fair."

"Fine," Remus agreed. "Was there something you needed, Harry?"

"Would you mind helping me with something?" Harry asked. "I'm gonna need you to keep it to yourself."

"Of course, what can I do for you?" Remus replied.

"I've got a list of spells I'd like you to cast into some crystals," Harry said, handing over a piece of parchment.

"Cutting curse, anti-coagulation curse, sticking charm, pat . . . Harry, what do you need all this for?"

"Got curious about alchemy, wanted to try something," Harry answered, semi-honestly.

"Try what?" Remus asked.

"That, is a secret," Harry replied with a smirk. Granted, no one else would have caught the reference, but it was a start. He'd be tossing out witty quips while engaged in mortal combat in no time.

"Let's see those crystals," Remus sighed. Sirius was a seriously bad influence.

"Thanks, Remus." Harry pocketed the now glowing crystals and ambled back to the library a few minutes later to rejoin his bushy haired friend.



"Was Remus able to help you?" Hermione asked.

"He was," Harry agreed. "I got another list of things I'd like you to pick up," Harry said. "And another case of god's own food if you can."

"Give it here," Hermione sighed. What was it with him and those disgusting cakes? She'd tried one, strictly as an experiment, and had nearly vomited at the taste.

"I need that silver to be as pure as possible, else I'd have just got something from the kitchens."

"Alright, Harry, I'll see what I can do," she promised. "Do you need anything else?"

"No." He dug around in his pocket to find another of his liberated wads of bills. "Tell me if this isn't enough and I'll see about getting more."

"Thank you, Harry," Hermione said, taking and pocketing the cash.

'Time for another field trip to the real world,' she mused, as she left the rickety old house. It didn't take long for her to get the items on Harry's list, a couple more trips out and she'd consider herself a professional. When she returned, she found him sitting by a large bubbling cauldron engraving runes on the billhook he'd taken to carrying around everywhere.

"What are you doing, Harry?" Hermione asked.

"I'm imbuing the billhook with the essences of the things you brought me," he replied. "The steel will add strength to the mystery alloy it's made of, the silver will help with werewolves, the obsidian will add sharpness as well as a few other things, and so on and so forth."

"Oh . . . wouldn't it have been easier to just start with good steel?" Hermione asked.

"Much, better if I had a master craftsman forge it too," Harry agreed. "Don't happen to have one, so we're doing it the hard way." Though

mystically, there might be a few advantages to using the antique. Harry was just at the point in his scholarship to be aware of such things, but not to know why it would be or how to check. "After this stage, I'm going to transfer the spells from the crystals to the billhook and make them stick."

"Why go through all the effort to do all this to a gardening tool?"

"I think it might be another thing that sets me apart from my host," Harry explained. "He was a great believer in axes where as I favor this for close combat. It's either a case of the same experiences producing different results in different people or another example of me doing something because I know it's something he doesn't do. Take your pick."

"How about both?" Hermione suggested.

"Works for me," Harry agreed. He plunged the blade into the bubbling mix, grinning in triumph when the blade began absorbing the brew. "Hermione, could I trouble you for a few drops of blood?" He nicked his hand and let it flow freely into the bubbling mass.

"Of course," she agreed. "Um . . ."

"It's necessary to have our blood mix on the blade, sorry," Harry said, figuring out the reason for her hesitation.

"Alright." The girl replicated his action. "Why did you need my blood?"

"This does two things, first is that it binds the blade to us, meaning that you'll be able to use it." He'd have to go through another ritual to add or subtract users. "Second is that it'll . . . well, think of it like starting a fire, you need to begin with a spark."

"We're using our blood to bind the enchantments?" Hermione asked uncertainly. This really wasn't her field and she didn't feel confident making guesses.

"Sort of, we're also . . . feeding it is a good way to put it, I guess," Harry said with a frown. "It's self powering, the more blood it absorbs,

the more powerful it'll get. More fights I use it in, the more dangerous I'll be."

"Harry, isn't that sort of . . . well . . ." the girl stammered.

"Dark?" he suggested.

"Evil," she confessed.

"Blood, not souls. The inbred idiots were right about one thing, blood is very magically powerful. It'd be like going outside and raising a metal rod every time you needed to charge a battery. Nothing dark there."

"Bit daft though."

"So it's not a very good analogy, I'm tired."

"Good night, Harry," Hermione hinted.

"In a few minutes," Harry said. "I need to monitor the rest of this reaction."

"What's going to happen?"

"Either we're going to get a newly enhanced billhook and a cauldron full of black goop, or the whole thing is going to melt into slag," Harry replied.

"Black goop?"

"That's the technical term," he agreed.

As it happened, luck was with our intrepid hero and his project was mostly a success. All he needed to do now was figure out a way to get the blade to stop glowing with a pale silvery mist. Task complete, Harry stumbled into bed and was soon fast asleep.

He awoke the next morning and went through his usual routine of shower, food, and research. One big difference was that Dumbledore was waiting in the library when he arrived.

"Good morning, Professor," Harry said, taking his seat.

"Good morning, Harry. I hope you don't mind but I decided to take advantage of your generous offer to use the library," the old man said.

"Not at all," Harry replied. "Books are meant to be used, the more of us using them the greater the chances that someone will find something useful."

"Quite," Dumbledore agreed. "But one must not forget that knowledge isn't solely found in books."

"What are you trying to get at?" Harry asked, closing his book and giving the old man his full attention.

"Remus tells me you're doing a bit of alchemical research," Dumbledore said.

"Really? He told me he wouldn't be telling you anything," Harry replied, and then he'd gone and spilled enough details to give the old man an idea of what was happening. "Guess I should cross him off my list of people to trust."

"He only told me because he was worried about you," Dumbledore admonished. "Alchemy is dangerous and, modesty aside, I am one of the foremost practitioners in the country."

"You're also someone I took off my list," Harry added.

"For trying to remove dark books?" Dumbledore asked.

"Why don't I make you a deal?" Harry offered, ignoring the question. "I'll give you a piece of the truth and in exchange, you and yours will leave the library alone and you will no longer try to restrict my reading list here or in Hogwarts."

"I'm not sure that I can agree to that, Harry," Dumbledore said sadly.

"Then I know I won't be telling you anything," Harry replied.

"How about a compromise?" Dumbledore asked. "I will only segregate books that are inherently dangerous, I promise that I will not remove or dispose of them without your permission. Similarly, I will only restrict your access to similar books while you are at Hogwarts."

"I want approval over anything you want to move, if we disagree, you leave it. If you use this as an excuse to do what you wanted to do in the first place, you'll burn every bridge you have with me."

"I can agree to that, Harry," Dumbledore said, eyes twinkling.

"Does this deal include the rest of the Order?"

"I will do my best to reign them in," Dumbledore agreed. "You must understand that we only act as we do out of worry for you, Harry."

"Must I?" Harry snorted. "I suspect that I'll regret this . . . deal. In return for you only separating out inherently dangerous books, inherently dangerous meaning that they're cursed and not because of the knowledge they hold, I will agree to give you a piece of the truth."

"Wonderful," Dumbledore said cheerfully. A grin appeared on the old man's face, looked as if he was finally getting a chance to repair some of the damage that must have appeared in their relationship.

"I'm a seer," Harry said seriously. "Meaning that I see things that others do not or that I've seen things others have not," he said skirting the truth. "The fact is, that causes me to do things and react to things in ways that differ from how other, so called normal people, will react."

"Why didn't you tell me before?" Dumbledore asked.

"The more people that know, the less useful it is," Harry replied. "Not to mention the fact that I don't trust your judgement. I've told you and

now you'll run off to tell the Order. Voldemort will know every word I said shortly thereafter."

"Harry, I trust Severus . . ."

"I don't," Harry interrupted. "I also didn't so much as mention his name, odd the way it immediately sprung to your mind, isn't it?" Harry gave a rather Gallic shrug. "It doesn't matter. I've given you enough information to hurt me, I have not given you enough to do more than that nor will I."

"You don't trust me, Harry?"

"Why did Voldemort come after me?" Harry shot back. "I never did get an answer to that question, did I? Trust is a two way street, Professor. You seem to think that it's all take and never give. You want to know more? Start by showing me that you can keep my secrets, then trade a few of your own. Good day, Professor." Harry rose to his feet, grabbed a couple books, and stormed out of the room.

"Good day, Mr. Potter," Dumbledore said automatically, lost in thought.

Dumbledore spend most of the day lost in thought, going over the boy's words again and again, trying to divine if there was any truth to the boy's implications. Finally, he decided that the boy was correct. It was time to stop treating him like a child and to begin treating like the adult he was becoming. In trying to protect the boy from a few terrible truths, he feared that he was causing even greater damage.

It took nearly an hour for the old man to settle his thoughts. The course of action he ended up settling upon was not without its risks. However, he felt that it offered a far greater chance of success than any of the others he saw before him and the potential reward more than made up for it. Mind made up, he strode down to the meeting room to wait for the rest of the Order to assemble. It did not take long.

"Thank you for coming," Dumbledore said in a firm, strong voice. "I'd like to start off with an apology, I did not know that the library would

become such a contentious issue, I am sorry for putting you at risk because of it."

"Risk is part of the job, Professor," Bill replied with a dashing grin. The looks on his companions faces indicated that they had a slightly different opinion.

"I've spoken with Harry," the Headmaster continued. "And while I am not at liberty to share the full contents of my conversation with young Mr. Potter, we did manage to come to an agreement regarding the books in the library."

"When can we get back to removing them, Albus?" Molly asked.

"Never, the agreement was that they would be left where they are unless they had some sort of curse. Bill, may I trouble you look over them for me?"

"Of course, Professor," the curse breaker agreed.

"Please keep Harry in the loop and do not remove anything without his express permission," Dumbledore requested.

"So we're just going to leave dangerous objects around where the children can get into them?" Molly demanded.

"We're going to trust that Harry is mature enough to manage his own affairs," Dumbledore replied, a touch of frost coloring his tone.

The remainder of the meeting went by rather quickly and at its conclusion, Dumbledore retraced his steps up the stairs and back to the Black library.

When he arrived, he saw the two friends bent over a book, heads almost touching. A smile appeared on the old man's face as he took in the scene, it was moments like this that kept him going, moments like this that reminded him that some things were worth fighting for, that not everyone in the wizarding world was a valueless snot.

"Do you have a moment, Harry?" Dumbledore asked softly.

"For you? Of course, come on in, Professor," Harry said.

"You once asked me why Voldemort went after you, at the time I did as I deemed prudent and told you nothing. Times have changed," Dumbledore said taking a seat.

"Do you want me to leave?" Hermione asked.

"No," Harry answered, undercutting the old man. "Stay, please."

Dumbledore looked like he was going to argue for a few moments before giving a little shrug, it wasn't worth making a fuss about and it was likely that Harry would tell her everything anyway. "A prophecy was given to me before your birth, saying words to the effect that a child would be born that could defeat the Dark Lord. When probed for clues, two possible children seemed to meet the necessary specifications. Neville Longbottom, and yourself. One of Voldemort's followers heard a fragment of the prophecy and took it to his master, that is why he came after you. If you like, I have a recording of its exact words in my office which you may listen to the next time you are at Hogwarts."

"Is that the only place it's stored?" Harry asked, knowing that it was not.

"The Department of Mysteries also holds a recording," Dumbledore replied.

"Is there anyway we can change it, or destroy the archive copy, Professor?" Hermione asked.

"It . . . it is something that I will have to look into," Dumbledore admitted.

"Did the prophecy say that I was the only one able to kill him or that I only had the power?" Harry persisted.

"It does not matter," Dumbledore said. "Tom believes it and so is bound by it. My advice is to ignore it, which is often the best policy



when dealing with prophecies." The old man stroked his beard. "Ms. Granger, are you familiar with Oedipus?"

"Yes, Professor," Hermione agreed.

"It is a similar case, had he or his father ignored the prophecy, it would not have come true. Prophecies often have only the power you give them, give them nothing and they will melt into nothing."

"I see." Harry looked lost in thought.

"Regarding your last jest, that Voldemort had placed a fragment of his soul inside your scar?" Dumbledore licked his lips. "There are indications that he may have done just that."

"I know," Harry agreed calmly. "It's not the only one he left behind, is it?"

"You've taken care of one of them, but I suspect that there may be several more," Dumbledore admitted.

"Speak with me before you do anything about them," Harry said firmly.

"More things you've seen?" Dumbledore asked.

"Something like that," Harry agreed.

"Dare I hope that you have some way of removing it from yourself that would not prove fatal?" Dumbledore asked hopefully.

Hermione squeaked, every bit of the girl's attention was focused on Harry, waiting to hear his answer.

"I have a couple ideas," Harry stated after a few moments of silence.

"Don't you dare scare me like that ever again, Harry James Potter," Hermione babbled, relief warring with sternness in her voice. She pulled her friend into a hug. "Never again!"

"Might I ask what it is?" Dumbledore looked as if a great weight had been lifted off his shoulders.

"We know that basilisk venom destroys them, and we know that basilisk venom is potentially survivable if Phoenix tears are applied to the wound," Harry stated, wrapping an arm around his best friend's waist.

"It would be quite painful," Dumbledore mused.

"I've felt pain before, Professor," Harry said calmly.

"Do you mind if I speak with Poppy about this?"

"Go right ahead, Professor, it's always best to get the opinions of a professional before dashing off to do something stupid."

"Advice I wish I'd heeded a time or two in my past," Dumbledore said, lips twitching.

"Advice Harry's never heeded in his life," Hermione giggled.

"I'm glad you said it, Ms. Granger, and not I," Dumbledore added, eyes twinkling.

Harry spent another late night deep in research, finding several nasty things that would make good additions to his billhook and a few other things that would be useful at Hogwarts, before finally turning in for the night. He woke up late the next morning,

The sounds of someone pacing in front of his door were enough to get him to cancel his plans of having a lay in to see what they wanted. He threw on another of his tweed suits, this one a deep olive green, grabbed his grey tweed flat cap, concealed his billhook in the small of his back under his jacket, and opened the door to see what they wanted.

"Harry," Hermione said, a wide false smile on her face. "I thought you'd want one of these in the morning." She held up a package of what was becoming the bane of her existence. She hoped the boy

appreciated how much she had to go through to get the damned things for him.

"Another thing I'm not going to like?" Harry asked, seeing the look on Hermione's face.

"Ron's here," Hermione said cheerfully, "he's hoping you'd be up for a game of chess later." She clutched her empty hands, hadn't she? A quick glance at her friend's bulging cheeks confirmed that he'd somehow managed to get the yellow confectioneries away from her.

"Please stop stalling," Harry prompted, cramming the second cake into his mouth the second he'd finished speaking.

"The Ministry is charging you with underage magic and violating the Statute of Secrecy," Hermione said. "They want to expel you, Dumbledore says that he'll try to get you off but that Fudge is really intent on getting to him by going after you so there's a good chance you'll end up being tried."

"Oh . . . huh, I haven't even done any magic this summer," Harry said thoughtfully.

"They say they have traces of a stunning spell being cast in your home," Hermione supplied helpfully. "And more magic around it."

"Interesting," Harry murmured. "Seems to confirm the theory that it's not us being tracked, it's them keeping an eye on the areas around our residences for magic. Would mean purebloods can do all the magic they want over the hols."

"Bastards," Hermione grumbled.

"Hermione, language," Harry said sternly, doing his best not to smirk at the now fuming girl.

"It isn't right that they treat us like second class citizens just because we live in the real world," Hermione grumbled.

"No, it isn't," Harry agreed. "Why don't we go talk to Ron?"

"Okay, come on," she replied. "Do you know what you're going to do about the Ministry?"

"I was thinking I'd hire a lawyer," Harry replied.

"Seems out of character for you," Hermione said thoughtfully. "Is this something else you got from him?" Hermione whispered.

"No, it's something that never would have occurred to him and something that never would have occurred to me either, before anyway. Guess it's another benefit is being able to think out of the box," Harry said thoughtfully. "Or being motivated to spend time trying to think out of the box."

"Yeah," Hermione agreed.

They found Ron trying and failing to make trick shots on the table in the billiards room. As they walked in, the boy succeeded in sinking the eight ball in the far left corner pocket.

"Well done," Hermione cheered.

"Not really, I was trying to sink the one in the side," Ron admitted.

"I was trying to do something else most of the times I accomplished something big," Harry said. Mostly not die, occasionally not die horribly. "How you been, Ron?"

"Hey, mate," Ron said with a grin, shooting the girl a wink. "Hermione tell you about the latest stupid thing the Ministry's trying to do?"

"She told me they were trying to get me expelled for underage magic," Harry volunteered.

"Wankers." Ron put both palms up and gave a 'what're ya gonna' do look. "Any plans, mate?"

"Thinking about hiring a lawyer," Harry replied.

"Thought Dumbledore was going to speak for you?" Ron said in confusion.

"I'm sure he'd be willing to, but it's time I learned to step out of his shadow and stand on my own," Harry said firmly.

Ron just nodded in response, not seeming to give the matter much weight.

"So how's your summer been?" Harry prompted.

"Meh, the usual," Ron replied. "Mum's been keeping me pretty busy, you're lucky to be here and out from under her thumb." The boy glanced around to make sure the woman wasn't present. Lowering his voice, he continued. "She's scuffed at you for some reason, I'd stay out of her way if I were you."

"Thanks, Ron."

"Mind telling me what you did to make her so skeeved?"

"Been spending a lot of time in a library full of books on dark magic, didn't let the Order get rid of them when they tried."

"You're learning dark magic?"

"I'm trying to research a way to kill Voldemort," Harry corrected. "Means I can't turn my nose up at any book."

"You want me to help you, mate?" Ron asked, accepting his friend's answer.

"You want your mum angry at you?" Harry shot back.

"To find a way to beat . . . him?" Ron shrugged. "Be cheap."

"I talked with Dumbledore, we've got a deal that will let me go through the restricted section. Much less chance of your mum finding out then," Harry offered.

"Thanks, mate," Ron said, drooping in relief. "Not that I wasn't willing to do it, you understand."

"Just that it would have made the rest of your summer really unpleasant?" Harry suggested.

"Yeah," Ron laughed.

"I'm thinking of going to Diagon later today, you think you can come?"

"Mum's keeping a pretty close watch on all of us, doesn't like to let any of us out of a warded area," Ron sighed. "Rather not . . . you know what happened to my uncles, don't you, Harry?"

"Yeah."

"She's just worried. If you think there'll be a fight or something, I'll go. Otherwise, I can't make my mum worry like that for no reason. I'm sorry, Harry."

"That's okay, Ron, I understand. You're right, you can't do that to your mum for no reason."

"Thanks for understanding, Harry."

"Does Dumbledore know that you're planing to use a professional?" Hermione asked.

"I didn't even know I was in trouble till you told me," Harry replied.

"I know, that was my way of hinting that you should tell Dumbledore you need to step out," Hermione stated.

"Don't ever change, Hermione," Harry laughed. "I'll tell him later after he gets in," he promised. Harry selected one of the cues from the rack and walked over to the table. "You two care for a game of eight ball?"

"How do you play?" Ron asked.

"I think I know," Hermione said brightly. "I read a book about it once."

They played several games with no clear winner emerging till shortly after Hermione suggested making a few wagers, just as a way of keeping score. Turned out that the girl had considerably more experience at billiards than just reading a book, winning several games and winning enough that she had no trouble extracting promises from both boys that they'd do their homework in what she considered a timely manner to avoid having their debts called in.

"Get O's on at least half your OWLs and I'll forget you owe me anything at all," the girl finished happily.

"How bout Harry gets all O's and I get an O in one class with EE's in the rest?" Ron suggested, feeling no guilt at the way he was tossing his friend under the bus.

"Hey!" Harry shot Ron a look of utter betrayal.

"Okay," Hermione agreed. "But you had better not try to avoid this by skipping out on some of your exams."

"Does Divination count?" Ron asked, feeling a horrible sinking feeling.

"O's in real subjects," Hermione amended. "Divination doesn't count."

"That's a relief, 'eh mate?" Ron nudged Harry.

"Traitor," Harry replied.

"It was every man for himself, mate, you're just jealous you didn't think to do it first," Ron said reasonably. "How'd you learn to play like that, Hermione?"

"My mum taught me," Hermione replied. "All it is, is simple physics and geometry."

"Wow! That's fascinating, Hermione, why don't you tell us all about it?" Harry suggested.

"If you'd really like to learn," Hermione agreed, happy at the opportunity to give an off the cuff lesson.

"Of course we would," Harry agreed, "wouldn't we, Ron?"

"Mate, I . . ."

"See how excited he is!" Harry exclaimed.

"Okay," Hermione agreed. "I think we should start with Newton's third law."

"That'd be great," Harry said. "But, oh wait, look at the time. I've got to go meet with Dumbledore, but you can still teach Ron all about Newton's third law and the rest of the stuff."

"Okay, Harry," Hermione agreed.

"You know that he's just using you to get revenge on me, right?" Ron asked as Harry walked away.

"I know," Hermione giggled. "You'd better listen closely, because there will be a test and if you do poorly on it, I'll expect you to get another O on your OWLs."

"Monster woman!" Ron accused.

Harry held in his laughter until after he was out of the room, then he let it flow.

He found Dumbledore in the kitchen after a short search and cleared his throat to attract the old man's attention.

"Harry," Dumbledore said with a smile. "I rather thought you'd be spending all your time with Hermione and Ron now that he's arrived."

"Hermione told me about what the Ministry is trying to do," Harry explained.



"You wish to discuss strategy?" Dumbledore nodded. "Sound thought, let me begin by saying that I don't believe it will be too much trouble to have you cleared."

"No offense, sir, but I was planning on hiring an attorney."

"If you like," Dumbledore agreed. "It may even be more advantageous, part of the reason they're going after you is to get to me."

"And appearing to distance myself from you, at least publicly, might cause some of the heat to go down," Harry finished.

"Would you like me to provide you with a list of skilled barristers that have little or nothing to do with me?"

"Please," Harry agreed. "Soon if you don't mind, I was hoping to get to Diagon today if possible."

"May I impose on you to take a bodyguard with you?" Dumbledore asked. "Not that Ms. Granger and Mister Weasley aren't quite formidable, I would just feel better knowing that someone from the Order was with you."

"Tonks," Harry replied.

"I had thought that Mr. Lupin might . . ."

"He's shown that he isn't willing to keep my secrets," Harry interrupted. "Tonks is an Auror which I'd like to think implies that she's at least half competent in a fight." He was willing to give her a pass on her first attempt, shock did strange things to everyone and it wasn't like she'd been completely useless. "Plus there's the fact that she was willing to die for me," he added thoughtfully. "Don't think I could break her of that habit without quite a bit of close contact."

"One usually sees that as a desirable trait in a bodyguard," Dumbledore pointed out.

"I'd prefer someone who can watch my back in a fight to someone that's going to dive in front of curses meant for me," he said firmly. 'Hypocrisy thy name is Xa . . . Harry Potter,' he thought to himself. 'Damn it, that is starting to get annoying!'

"I'll ask young Nymphadora if she's available," Dumbledore agreed.

"She prefers to be called Tonks," Harry pointed out.

"And I prefer to be called Albus. When she stops calling me sir, Headmaster, and Professor, I will start calling her by her family name," Dumbledore retorted.

"Fair enough," Harry said, dropping the matter.

They continued their conversation until Harry judged that enough time had elapsed so that he'd be safe from Hermione's lecture, excusing himself, the boy returned to his friends to find a gleeful Hermione and a depressed looking Ron.

"Agreed to play her again?" Harry asked.

"She offered to let me skip getting an O if I won," Ron agreed glumly.

"What'd you bet this time?" Harry prompted.

"I have to read Hogwarts a History and five books of her choice by Christmas," Ron said.

"Care for another game?" Hermione asked.

"Sure," Harry agreed. "But this time, if we bet, it'll be for blood or gold or something it won't hurt me to lose."

"You're no fun, Harry," Hermione said with a pout.

"I don't have time to branch out in my reading material at the moment," Harry replied. "Sorry, Hermione. Be happy to teach you the right way to gut someone or how to use a garrote or something."

"You'd be happy to teach me that anyway," Hermione sniffed. "It's no fun if I don't force you to do something you wouldn't enjoy."

"But would, in your opinion anyway, improve us in some way," Harry sighed.

"Education is very important to your future, the more OWLs you manage to get, the better your chances of getting a good career," Hermione lectured. "So of course I'm going to try to force you to get as many OWLs as possible, you two are my best friends." She shot Ron a predatory look. "How bout another game, Ron, double or nothing?"

"Gimme a chance to do some practicing first," Ron grumbled.

They got in another game and a half of experiencing the now familiar experience of being utterly dominated by Hermione before Harry's Order assigned bodyguard arrived.

"Come in, Tonks!" Harry called out, hearing someone outside the door and guessing it was the Auror.

"Wotcher, Harry," she said as she ambled in. "Got a question for you."

"Shoot."

"Why'd you want me to be yer watcher?" Tonks asked, mystified by the request.

"Well, there's the fact that you're gorgeous," Harry admitted, "always good to have eye candy around."

"Prat," Hermione said, sticking her tongue out at him.

Ron shot him a thumbs up, signifying that he most definitely approved of Harry's line of thought.

"She still thinks I keep her around for her mind," Harry stage whispered to Tonks, eliciting a blush from his friend, a laugh from Ron, and a giggle from the Auror. "The real reason I want you around is because you showed that you were willing to die for me when the Death Eaters attacked my house," Harry said, turning serious.

"I was just doing my job," Tonks said modestly.

"Then we're going to have to change your job," Harry said. "That'll be the first thing we do, second will be to break you of that silly habit of trying to throw your life away on my behalf." The boy put a hand on the woman's shoulder and gazed into her eyes. "I need people that will stand beside me, that will watch my back. I don't need people that will throw their lives away, even four for one it would have been a bad trade. Do you understand, Tonks?"

"Yes," Tonks breathed, mesmerized by his intense gaze.

"See that you do," Harry said firmly. "That goes for you guys too," he said firmly to his two friends.

"We love you too, Harry," Hermione laughed, shifting her focus back to the book in her lap.

"You want us to pick you up anything at the alley, Ron?" Harry asked.

"Nah, but thanks. I'll be here practicing my shot when you get back," he said.

"You do know that you're just going to get overconfident and Hermione's gonna hustle you for more bets, don't you?"

"Yeah, but at least I'll put on a better show this time," Ron replied, eyes locked on the pool table.

"Alright," Harry shrugged. At least he was losing to a friend. He got a sudden image of a crying Draco losing the Malfoy fortune to a laughing Hermione. Bliss, and something to look into when he had a moment of time.

"You two ready or do you want to change or something?" Tonks asked.

"I'm ready," Hermione offered.

"We need to make a quick stop by the kitchen before we go," Harry announced, ignoring the shudder hearing that statement elicited from Tonks.

"Are you alright, Tonks?" Hermione asked in concern.

"Remembering the last time he wanted to do something in a kitchen," Tonks said.

"Was it your first real fight?" Harry prompted.

"Yeah," she agreed.

"It gets easier," he told the witch. "It also helps if you don't think about what could happen to yourself, focus instead on doing unto the other guy before he has a chance to do unto you."

"How many fights to the death have you been in?" Tonks asked, staring at the boy in shocked horror. The thought that a schoolboy could have lived such a life . . .

"Several," Harry admitted in a tone that brought the conversation to a close.

They arrived in the kitchen and Harry spent several minutes rummaging around drawers before finding what he was looking for. He palmed the object, and slipped it into his left jacket pocket.

"What'd you get, Harry?" Hermione asked curiously.

"Ice pick, most people don't think about how useful they can be." Jam one in someone's ear and they'd never be a problem again.

"Do I want to know?" Tonks asked.

"Do you?" Harry retorted.

"No, but I have a feeling I need to," the Auror admitted.

"It's very good if you want to kill someone, less useful in a fight," Harry replied. "I can show you later if you want."

"Where did you learn all these things?" Tonks demanded. "I know Hogwarts hasn't changed that much from when I attended."

"That's a good question," Harry stated. "Are we going to be using the floo to get to Diagon or a Portkey?"

Tonks gave the boy a look. "I thought we'd use the floo, I also had Dumbledore make up a couple portkeys that I'd like you to use if there's trouble."

"I'll consider it," Harry conceded. "Thank you for looking out for us, Tonks."

"Yes, thank you, Tonks," Hermione echoed.

"Just doing my job, Harry," Tonks replied.

"Are you?" Harry prompted.

"What?"

"Are you getting paid for this or is this all off the clock?" Harry clarified.

"It's off the clock," Tonks admitted. "But I don't need to be paid, anything I can do to bring down 'you-know-who' is payment enough."

"What's having Dumbledore stop calling you Nymphadora worth to you?"

"Diagon Alley trips whenever you want them and Hogsmead after you get back to school," Tonks said immediately.

"Hogsmead?"

"You know how to sneak out, right?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed.

"Well, tell me and I'll be there watching your back when you do and I'll do my best to keep the Professors from finding out," Tonks said quickly.

"You'd do all that for free, wouldn't you?"

"Yeah, but this way you don't have to feel guilty about taking advantage of my good nature," Tonks retorted.

"She's got you, Harry," Hermione snickered.

Harry suppressed the laugh, but not the grin. "Call him Albus."

"What?"

"He doesn't like it when you call him sir, Professor, or Headmaster, he likes it when people call him by his first name. Call him Albus and he'll call you Tonks out of simple courtesy."

"But . . . but he's Dumbledore."

"Yes, he's also someone that would prefer to keep things as informal as possible," Harry said gently.

"I'll . . . I'll try it," Tonks said, looking uncertain about the whole matter. "Come on," she barked, trying to regain a bit of her tough Auror image. "Sooner we get your business done, the more time we have for fun."

They followed Tonks through the floo, the Leaky Cauldron, and half way down Diagon Alley before the woman froze.

"Did you forget where we were going?" Hermione asked.

"I don't think you ever told me," Tonks admitted.

"Harry!" Hermione admonished, turning on her friend.

"Law offices of . . ." He dug out the list Dumbledore had given him. "Actually, why don't you look at this and tell me who you recommend."

"Me?" Tonks asked.

"I got these from Dumbledore, he says that they're decent and that they have little or nothing to do with him. If you needed someone to represent you in court, who would you choose?"

"Um . . ." Tonks studied the list. "Number three. I know his daughter and he just destroyed the latest case we had against Malfoy." He'd done a good job of it too, reducing the amount of bribes Lucius had needed to pay by at least half.

"He's Malfoy's barrister?" Harry tried to keep his calm.

"Charged Uncle Lucius through the nose too," Tonks agreed with a grin. "Might have been cheaper to pay those bribes. He'd probably give you a discount though."

"If he's Malfoy's attorney, why would he give Harry a discount?" Hermione asked.

"Have you ever heard the expression, gold does not stink?" Tonks asked.

"Yeah," Hermione agreed. "One of the Roman emperors said it I think."

"That's only the case with Uncle Lucius if he spreads around enough of it. Harry's gold is clean from the start."

"Oh."

"Guess we should go to Gringotts first to see how much I have to play with," Harry suggested.



"If it's a hardship, Dumbledore asked me to let slip that he could help offset the costs," Tonks volunteered.

"Next time you speak with him, let slip that I'm grateful for his offer but am turning it down," Harry requested.

"Will do," Tonks agreed.

A quick trip to Gringotts revealed that, thanks to the Ministry pay out for the destruction of Voldemort he'd received shortly after his first birthday, the royalties from the 'Boy-Who-Lived' book series, the royalties from the 'Boy-Who-Lived' doll . . . er, action figures, and the modest amount he'd received from his parents, money was not a problem at the present time.

Tonks led them to the office of Harry's perspective Barrister and waited outside while Harry conducted his business with the man.

"So what can I do for you, Mr. Potter?" the Barrister asked.

"I want to sue the Prophet for defamation and anything else you can think to tack on. I want to sue the Ministry for attempted murder and anything else you want to tack on. And I need someone to represent me in my upcoming criminal case."

"Attempted murder?" he prompted.

"Dementors almost did me in a couple times and they were at the school at the Minister's orders," Harry explained.

"Don't think we'll succeed in that, might get 'em for assault," he mused.

"Could I also have you sue for false imprisonment on Sirius Black's behalf?" Harry asked.

"I'd have to get something from him authorizing it. If that should suddenly appear after speaking with you, I would have reason to suspect that you are in contact with him and would be forced to report

that to the Ministry due to my oath," the man replied. "If such an authorization along with say . . . one hundred galleons were to go to my partner after a reasonable amount of time had passed, I would not be able to suspect a thing if such an authorization included a request that my partner were to be particularly discreet." The Barrister leaned back in his chair. "I couldn't begin to guess what another firm would want as an upfront retainer, but I don't believe they'd have grounds to be suspicious if anonymous notes were sent asking what they would charge in a hypothetical situation such as the hypothetical situation we just discussed."

"Oh . . . would it be possible to really put the screws on the Prophet first and have them publicly admit to being manipulated by the Fudge administration as part of the settlement?"

"Assuming Fudge had something to do with the libelous statements the Prophet has been printing as of late, it should be very possible," the Barrister agreed. "Assuming they'll be caught as flatfooted by the filing of this suit as I suspect they'll be."

"Why wouldn't they suspect anything?" Harry asked.

"Our libel laws were written by thin skinned politicians that wanted to be able to silence any paper that crossed them, meaning that the Prophet is in a very tenuous position. The reason they're going after you is that Dumbledore has publicly come out against these laws on a number of occasions, they figure that he won't undercut his position by suing them and they figure that you're his man."

"How much will this cost me?" Harry asked.

"Eight percent from the Prophet case and fifteen from the Ministry," he replied.

"Why the difference?"

"Because I hate the son of a bitch that the Prophet hired to be their staff council," the barrister explained. "Personal feuds are one of the main things that the legal profession runs off of. I'm willing to take

cases for less money, work nights and weekends just for the chance to rub that smug bastard's nose in a pile of defeat."

"What about the criminal case?" Harry prompted.

"Twenty five galleons up front," the Barrister replied. "And I'm also going to need you to tell me everything that happened, regardless of how important you think it is to the case."

Harry counted out the coins and told of what happened from the time Tonks burst into his room to the time he arrived at the Headquarters of the Order of the Phoenix. His new barrister then spent the next half hour asking him questions to nail down every little detail.

"Should be a piece of cake," the Barrister announced. "I'll be in contact."

"Thank you, sir."

"Don't thank me till after we've won," the Barrister replied. The door opened with a wave of his hand to reveal a curious looking Tonks.

"All done, Harry?"

"Yeah," Harry agreed.

"Is this the young lady you were with the night you were attacked?" the Barrister asked.

"She is," Harry agreed.

"Please set up an appointment to come by and give your account of what happened," the Barrister requested.

"Alright," Tonks agreed.

"Let's get in some shopping before we go back to the Order," Harry said after he rejoined the girls in the outer office.

"You're volunteering to go shopping with us?" Tonks asked in disbelief. "I thought guys hated that."

"We do," Harry agreed, feeling a familiar sinking feeling in his gut. "Unfortunately, it's tradition so I don't have a choice. Only gotta do it once and I'm only willing to go to five stores. Three of 'em have to be a haberdasher, a place to get rare books, and a weapon shop. No more than ten minutes per store."

"You're willing to go to five shops that we want to go to in addition to that and you have to carry everything," Tonks countered, a gleam appearing in her eye.

"Three shops, Hermione 'll get more enjoyment from the bookstore than I ever could."

"Deal," Tonks said quickly.

"And I don't have to carry . . . damn it," Harry cursed.

"And you're taking us out for ice cream after and it doesn't count towards the total," Hermione added.

"Fine," Harry grumbled. Curse his love of clichés.

Harry picked up a couple of hats, another tweed suit, and a new pair of shoes at the Haberdasher. Spent nearly twenty minutes watching Hermione run wild through the bookstore before he'd managed to pry her away from it, and was more than a bit disappointed by the selection of junk on the racks at the weapon store.

"Anything that doesn't weigh five pounds more than it should?" Harry asked, on the brink of leaving the store in disgust.

"Enchanted walking sticks have always been rather popular," the salesman said quickly, sensing the opportunity to make a sale slipping out of his fingers. "Try this one. Self transfigures into a sword, self adjusts for height, elegant, and capable of casting spells," the salesman said, handing the cane over.

"How do I turn it into a sword?" Harry asked. The salesman demonstrated and Harry took two practice swings before putting it down. "No."

"Sir?"

"That's not a sword," Harry explained. "The balance is wrong, the weight is too high, and the edge couldn't cut butter."

The salesman gave him a look of frank appraisal. "How bout this?" he asked, handing the boy another stick. "Just will the blade to appear."

Harry made a few practice swings, they were enough to capture his interest so he decided to give the blade a closer look.

"Toledo steel," the salesman commented. "You want a good sword, you take it and transfigure it into a stick, other way around doesn't work so well. Won't cast spells, wouldn't recommend any that do anyway, but it will make a nasty club if you don't want to run someone through."

"Any other weapons that were made to be used?" Harry asked, putting the sword aside.

"Not really," the salesman admitted. "Most people come here to pick up something to decorate the house with, ninety percent of what I've got is poorly made junk. I might have something in the back if you'd like me to check?"

"Please," Harry agreed.

The salesman departed and returned a couple minutes later carrying a meter long wrapped package which he placed on the counter.

"Found a horse pick and a couple Robbins punch daggers." The salesman popped his neck. "Free if you buy the sword."

"Deal," Harry said.

What followed was, in Harry's words, "three little shops of Horror." The boy smirked, even burdened down as he was, he still managed to find humor in the situation.

"Don't complain, this was your idea," Tonks said over her shoulder.

"You know, you could just shrink these bags," Harry grumbled.

"Isn't it much fun that way," Tonks said with a grin. "Is it, Hermione?"

"Right you are Tonks," Hermione said with a straight face. "Suffer, Harry."

"Keep it up, and I'll tell your parents that you're eating sweets," Harry retorted.

"You wouldn't," the girl said confidently.

"Try me."

"I don't mean that you don't have the guts, I mean that if you did, you'd never see another of those disgusting cakes you like so much again," the girl explained, a smug look on her face. "You have no idea where I found them, you have no idea how I found them, and I'm not going to tell you."

"Damn it." Curse his weakness for all things sweet and prepackaged, curse it. "We're finished, that's all that matters."

"You promised to take us out for ice cream," Hermione pointed out.

"You promised I'd take you out for ice cream," Harry corrected.

"Exactly," Hermione said with a smirk. "Let's go."

A quick stop at the ice cream parlor and they were back at Headquarters. They found Ron in the billiards room with a deck of cards in his hand and a smirk on his face.

"Care for a game, Hermione?" he asked.

"Sure you don't want to play more snooker?" Hermione asked hopefully.

"We can do that later," Ron replied. "Do you know how to play poker?"

"I read a book on it a few years ago," Hermione stammered, looking nervous. "Okay, but we're not going to bet anything this time."

"Care to join us, Harry?" Ron asked.

"Nah, I gotta figure this stuff out," Harry said, waving to the bundle of things he'd bought. He'd been in enough ambushes to know the best way to survive them. "Thanks for the offer though."

"Don't spend too much time holed up in your room, mate," Ron advised.

"I won't," Harry agreed. 'Sorry, Ron,' he thought to himself as he walked out. 'Your sacrifice won't be forgotten.'

AN:

Polish by dogbertcarroll

Typos by redbaron\_94014, Eric, Jon Wombat, redbaron\_94014, Dark King, Tara Li, Andrew Chapman, walkabouttigger, Daenerys, Jon Wombat, jaycb65, David Ford, Joel N. Fischhoff, Bob, Daenerys

Facts provided by Tommy King

Mistakes pointed out by redbaron\_94014

Suggestions by Joel N. Fischhoff, Andrew Chapman

Omake by davidiusbrown

"Harry, you have no idea how difficult it was for me to get these. American groceries are not exactly sold at Tesco's. I had to pay

Gringotts for an American military dependent's ID card, and the Air Force base commissary doesn't accept payment in pounds, so I had to go back to Gringotts to get American dollars and back to the Air Force base, and then back again the next morning because the commissary was closed. I swear to you if you do not explain everything to me right now, you will never see, smell, or taste a Hostess product, ever."

Omake by DireSquirrel

"Arry?" Fleur asked, walking over to him with a puzzled look on her face.

"What's up, Fleur?" Harry replied, glancing up from what he was working on.

"I zank you for ze cadeaux d'anniversaire, ze birthday gift, but I am confused," the French girl replied, pulling out a box. "Why a track suit and a katana?"

"I hope you don't need it, but a little preparation just in case never hurts," Harry said with an innocent shrug.

Mini OMAKE by me:

Just a stray thought I may have to use in the future in this fic or another.

"I'm Professor Harry Potter and I'm here to teach you offense against the dark arts," Harry announced. "Lesson one; Kill it with fire."



Disclaimer: An author once said something along the lines of; "there's a word for people that think the views of a character are the same of those of the author, that word is fools."

## Dungeons 'n Drow

Harry sat in his cupboard, nursing his wounds. It was his seventh birthday so Dudley and the goons had decided to give him a 'party'. Unnoticed, the boy's magic surged with his emotions, waiting, wanting to do something, anything to take the pain away.

"I wish I was somewhere else," Harry wheezed. "Anywhere but here!"

And then, in a flash of light that no one saw, he was.

Hogwarts, four years later:

Minerva stormed into the Headmaster's office with a sharp look on her face that caused the old man to sigh in frustration, it was going to be one of those days.

"What can I do for you, Minerva?" Albus asked lightly. Perhaps he could fake some sort of medical ailment to distract the woman? On the heels of that thought was another, would Poppy back him up?

"You can explain this," she barked, flinging a scrap of paper at his face.

"Harry Potter, unknown," the old man read.

"That's never happened," Minerva growled. "The quill always knows the addresses, always."

"Perhaps the wards . . ." the old man began.

"I checked," she interrupted. "He's not there, disappeared years ago according to his so called-" A sneer appeared on her face. "Family!"

"What?" Albus went cold. "Tell me everything."

"Disappeared from a locked cupboard four years ago," Minerva reported. "I told you, Albus. I told you what those people were like and you didn't listen to me."

"You did and I didn't," he agreed. This wasn't the time to get bogged down by arguments. "Get Filius, I want the two of you to go directly to the Dursley residence. Sit on the family and guard the scene."

"I'll get a vial of Veritaserum from Severus before I go." She'd enjoy forcing it into that fat tub's gob.

"I . . . do so." Now was not the time to be squeamish. "I'll join you as soon as I've picked up some trustworthy help from the Ministry."

The Dursley residence, three hours later:

Minerva glared down at the drooling morons, the story she'd wrung out of them had not been pleasant.

"Were you able to find anything else, Minerva?" Albus asked gently.

"No!" the woman spat. "Just that he disappeared from the locked cupboard and that I want to do things that would see me in Azkaban."

Dumbledore turned to give instructions to faceless individuals he'd brought from an unnamed department, only to find that they were already about their work.

It didn't take long for them to piece together what happened. Even years after the event, the magical residue of Harry's departure was still strong and, more importantly, clear enough to get an accurate trace.

"Hopped dimensions," one of the faceless men who'd arrived with Dumbledore said professionally. "Be able to send you after him in an hour or so."

"Thank you," Dumbledore said calmly.

The man was back forty five minutes later to announce that they were ready.

"A regular portkey should get you back here," he said as his fellows readied the ritual. "Be sure to report if there's anything useful or interesting on the other side." If they didn't return, they'd assume there wasn't and would forget the whole thing as a bad investment.

"We will," Dumbledore agreed. "Ready, Minerva, Filius?"

"Ready, Albus."

"One more thing," the individual said. "Looks like time may act differently on the other side, don't be surprised if the boy is older than you'd expect him to be."

"How much older?" Dumbledore asked quickly.

"Could be a year could be a hundred, no way of knowing without more tests."

"Let us be off then," Dumbledore said firmly.

The world seemed to shift and blur for a few seconds, minutes, eternities. Up was down and down was left, and everything was spinning, spinning, whirling, turning, shifting until suddenly, it stopped. They had arrived in another time in another place.

They found themselves standing on a manure covered cobble stone street in a city that smelled like an open sewer, which, in a way it was. Best not examine the water in the canals that allowed access to every borough.

"Gardy loo!" a voice called out from above and the three Hogwarts Professors narrowly missed being drenched in a foul liquid. Perhaps it was best not to walk too close to the buildings either.

"Now that we're here, how will we find him?" Minerva demanded. The old woman took the whole scene in with a look of frank disapproval, this was worse than a trip to the continent.

"Find who?" a voice asked from the alley asked. "Old Yan can help you find anyone for a silver coin."

"We're looking for a boy named Harry Potter," Minerva replied.

"Harry?" the old man grinned. "I may know who you're talking about, but he's no boy."

"You know, Harry?" Dumbledore interjected. The unspeakables had warned that time may move different here.

"I know of him," the old man corrected. "He's a Condottiero of some renown. The bards love to sing about him and his adventures."

"Tell us about him," Albus requested.

"Afraid my memory isn't so good when my pockets are empty," the old man replied.

Albus reached into his pocket and pulled out a handful of coins. "Here."

"They say that he got his start as a gutter thief before winning a scholarship to study magic. I know that he became an adventurer for a few years after that before he joined of one of the free companies in the war against the north. He was commanding the company when the war ended and he led it in the war of the cities, the invasion of Crusoe, and the siege of Agamemnon."

"Where is he now?"

"Last I heard, he was working for the Church on the Rock up in North Hallow. Three days north of here."

"Come, Minerva, Filius," Dumbledore said grandly. "We've not a moment to spare."

Three days of travel and a dozen ambushes later, the three Professors found themselves in a meeting with the spiritual leader of

the Church on the Rock in a richly furnished meeting hall, decked out in rich white silk and finely cut gems.

"Yes," the religious leader agreed. "We've hired Harry the Lucky, what of it?"

"We need to speak with him about a personal matter," Dumbledore said delicately.

"Planning to kill him are you?" the old man laughed. "Guess it's to be expected. He does have a certain reputation after all."

"Erg?"

"What'd he do?" the old man asked eagerly. "Seduce your wife, daughter, sister? Kill a close family member? Kill everyone in your family, burn your village, seduce half your family and kill the other half?"

"We'd like to offer him a place at our school," Dumbledore assured the older man.

"Really?" The old man regarded them all with a look of frank skepticism. "In that case, I'd be happy to lend you one of my priests as a guide for a donation of only a hundred gold pieces."

"Isn't that a bit steep?" Dumbledore coughed.

"If you're not going to tell me why you want to kill him, then I can't sell the story to the bards and subsidize your trip." The old priest sniffed. "I bid you good day."

Several acolytes stepped forward to 'gently' escort the three professors out of the room.

"Gonna make that 'donation' or are we going to have to ask you to leave?" one of the larger acolytes growled.

"We already 'donated' twenty gold for the meeting with your leader," Dumbledore protested.

"And you had it," the acolyte agreed. "We'll need a hundred more for the guide."

Grumbling, Dumbledore pulled out his money pouch and counted out one hundred golden galleons. "Happy?"

"Brother Brutus will be escorting you to the camp," the acolyte announced.

"Come with me," a cassock clad man, presumably Brother Brutus, murmured. They followed him to a manure filled stable. "Pick your mounts."

"Dibs on the dun," Minerva said quickly.

"I'll take the bay," Filius hastened to add.

"Then I suppose I'm left with the paint," Dumbledore announced. It had been a while since he'd last ridden, but he was confident that his skills hadn't faded too much.

"The paint is mine," Brother Brutus interjected. "You'll have to take the Donkey."

It wasn't easy, but Dumbledore managed to resist the urge to pull rank to get one of the horses for himself. It became harder to resist when the donkey bit and tried to kick him. Surly creature.

They were on the road, a double lane dirt track really, for three hours when Albus decided to break the silence. "Why do they call him Harry the Lucky?" the old man asked, slapping a horse fly that had gotten too close.

"Why do they call him Harry the Lucky?" the old man asked, slapping a horse fly that had gotten too close.

"Cause the bastard could fall into a cesspool and he'd come out smelling of roses with pockets filled with gold," the guide said sourly. "Not to mention that Drow he's got." Now there was a fine example of

the type of female form that tempted one to violate their vows of celibacy.

"I see." Albus decided to find out what a 'Drow' was later. "What can you tell me about him?"

"He's death on two legs, not a man to cross at all. I heard that he was on an expedition into the pits, you couldn't find enough gold in the world to get me near one of the entrances and he went down into them for two years. In short, not the kind of man you'd wish to cross."

Albus frowned in frustration, every answer brought a dozen new questions, each new question prompted a dozen more.

"How much longer before we get there?" Filius spoke up. His backside was killing him, it had been far too long since he'd been in the saddle, too long since he'd had any sort of a ride come to think about it. He shot a glance at Minerva, perhaps it was time to offer to crack open another bottle of scotch?

"Shouldn't be long now, unless they've changed camps," Brother Brutus replied. "Don't see why they would, last message said they were doing a quick sweep of the last village."

They smelled the camp long before they arrived, the stench of burnt flesh and ruptured intestine hung thickly in the air and the sounds of men moaning in pain echoed through the trees.

"What's that?" Albus asked.

"They must have found another nest of cultists," their guide replied. "Funeral pyres."

"I see."

Eventually, they caught sight of several neat rows of camps in the common field of an empty village.

"Here we are," Brother Brutus said with a satisfied grin. The man spurred his horse in the direction of the nearest pickets. "Wait here," he called over his shoulder.

Brother Brutus conferred with the pickets for a few moments before waving them forward.

One of the men who looked large enough to give Hagrid a run for his money gave Dumbledore a hard look. "Wizard?"

"I am," the Headmaster agreed.

"I'll put down five silver that they last more than two minutes against the boss," the man declared.

"Ten that the boss makes the short one kill the other two," another, this one barely reaching the first man's knee countered. He stroked his beard. "I'd say that would up the time to at least five minutes, more if the boss wants to put on a show."

Several more bets flew back and forth, none of them the sort that was designed to make any of the Hogwarts Professors feel good about their upcoming meeting or the man they were to meet with.

"We finished, gentlemen?" Brother Brutus asked and was answered by several nods. "Then we've a meeting to attend."

"Do I want to know?" Minerva asked, fairly sure that she didn't, less sure that she didn't need to.

"The men like to bet on how long the assassins will last against their captain," Brother Brutus explained. "Current record is four minutes, but that was a large group."

"I see."

They rode to the center of the camp to find a solid looking grey haired man supervised as the men cut stakes to impale the prisoners at his feet.



"What are you doing?" Dumbledore asked, horrified almost beyond words by what was happening before him.

"Contract says that any cultists taken alive are to be impaled," the solid looking man explained calmly.

"If their crimes are so serious, then you should see them tried in a proper court," Albus argued.

"I am the proper court," the man barked. "Empowered by the church, the king, and the local magistrate to do as I see fit. As for the rest, Marko!"

"Sir?" A man covered in armor from head to toe sprang forward.

"Show them what we found," he ordered grimly.

"At once, sir," Marko agreed. The man left with their guests, returning a few minutes later with three deathly pale mages.

"Would you accept a bit of help?" Minerva asked, wiping her vomit stained lips with the sleeve of her robe. "The sooner these sassanaks get the point, the better."

"Minerva?" Albus muttered in shock.

"Children, Albus, you saw what these bastards did," Minerva spat. "They deserve worse than what they're getting and you know it."

"My men know what they're doing," the man said calmly. "I'm afraid that you'd just get in the way. Now what brings you to my camp?"

"We're here to meet Harry," Dumbledore replied.

"I'm Harry," the man introduced himself. "What do you want to meet about?"

"A personal matter," Dumbledore stalled.

"We're not trying to kill you," Filius added.

"That's what the last group said," Harry laughed. "You don't want to know what I did to them. I really don't like being lied to."

"We really aren't trying to kill you," Minerva said sincerely. "And even if we were, I'd wait till after you got those bastards on the stake."

"Fair enough. We'll meet in my tent," Harry decided. "This way." He walked down one of the rows to a large pavilion. "Not much, but better than anything I had in the first fifteen years on the road."

The three Professors were shocked at how small the tent was on the inside, didn't seem to have expanded at all and barely had any climate control charms.

"Have a seat." Harry waved them to a large folding table. "Refreshments," he ordered.

"At once," a smooth feminine voice agreed, drawing the faculty's attention to a silent figure covered in robes.

The figure glided to Harry's side and a delicate, coal black hand reached out of the dark silk robe to set a glass in front of her master.

"This is Min, my servant," Harry introduced the cloaked figure. "Part of my payment for a bit of dirty business in the pits."

"Part of your payment?" Dumbledore repeated sickly.

"Only reason she sticks around is because she's waiting for a chance to slip a blade in between my ribs," Harry laughed.

"I've the time to be patient," a musical voice agreed from under the hood.

"Now then, what was it you wanted to speak with me about?"

"We're here to deliver your invitation to attend Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry," Dumbledore said dully. "The premier school of magic in your home dimension."

"Don't you think I'm a bit old to go back to school?"

"We have a way of taking care of that," Dumbledore replied.

"How long is this school of yours?"

"Seven years."

"That's all?" Harry asked in shock. "I was at the guild for twelve years when they tossed me out into my first war. And even after twelve years, I was still five away from making journeyman."

"What do you mean, tossed you out?" Filius joined the conversation.

"Any apprentice that had been at the guild for more than ten years was drafted." Harry smirked at the memory of how few mages actually went. "Unless of course their families were too powerful to annoy or rich enough to bribe their way out of it." Which the majority of them were. "War lasted two years and I was informed that not a minute of it counted towards seniority when I got back." He laughed again. "In fact, they said that my next three years wouldn't count because I'd have to be retrained to get back to guild standards." His smile turned feral. "Afraid I made a bit of a mess on my way out."

"What kind of mess?" Dumbledore prompted, almost afraid of hearing the answer.

"The pampered princes at the academy were ill equipped to deal with an experienced battle mage, trying to stop me was the last mistake several of them made." He'd learned far more and far more useful in two years of war than he had in the previous twelve years at the academy. "Now then, why don't we talk business, shall we? First thing I want to know is how you intend to restore my youth."

Their negotiations carried on until through the night and well into the next day.

"Alright," Harry agreed. "I think we have a deal."

"I think we do," Dumbledore said with a grin.

"Been thinking of retiring and now I can." Didn't seem like a bad idea to do it in a world where he was as anonymous as everyone else and where he didn't have enough enemies to build an army. "Min."

"Master?"

"You're free," Harry said simply. "And welcome to use the knife on my belt if you wish."

"That's not fair," Min whined.

"All talk?" he challenged.

"You know I could have killed you and escaped after the first ten years," she agreed unhappily. "And you weren't supposed to point it out like that." It was just rude is what it was, a blow to her pride as a matron's daughter.

"There was a seed of doubt at the back of my mind," he admitted. "Wanna come with me, then?" Harry asked "You're welcome to do that as well."

"Where you go, I follow, master."

Harry stepped out of the tent, his eyes squinting at the sudden brightness. "Lieutenant."

"Sir?"

"The company's yours, congratulations."

"Thank you, sir."

"I'm going to tell you what my predecessor told me, don't screw it up."

"I won't, sir."

"Have Noodnik get everything packed," Harry ordered. "I want to be gone before the sun sets."

"I'll handle it, master," Min agreed.

Harry spent the next few hours in preparation for his coming departure, finally rejoining the professors and his servant a few hours before sunset.

"Ready?" Dumbledore asked.

"In a minute," Harry replied.

They were soon joined by a little man with a large nose and a giant wooden chest on his back.

"Ready," Harry stated.

"Touch the rope," Dumbledore commanded.

Everyone complied and the portkey activated.

"We're back," Albus announced, doing his best to ignore the fact that Minerva was vomiting on his shoes.

"Looks like I'm a child again," Harry said thoughtfully. "Guess I won't need that elixir after all."

"But we still expect it to be delivered promptly," Min added quickly.

"Good point," Harry agreed. "How you feeling, Min?"

"Like a girl of barely fifty," she giggled. "One that can't wait for you to grow up a bit."

"Something to look forward to," Harry agreed. "And . . . why do you look exactly the same, Noodnik?"

The large nosed man took a moment to inspect himself. "This is the way I always look, sir."

"Yes but . . ." Harry shook his head, he tried not to pry into his employee's private affairs. "First thing we need to do is find a place to set up the keep."

"Keep?" Dumbledore echoed.

"It's such a pain that I don't usually bother with it when I'm on a campaign unless I expect to be in one place for more than a week or two. Near that school of yours would be best, but I don't mind a small commute."

"I'd though you could stay in the dormitories with the other students," Dumbledore said weakly.

"We never agreed to that," Min said, voice like a babbling brook.

"And I'm not about to be cooped up with a bunch of brats," Harry added.

"The rules state . . ."

"We did agree that I would follow all reasonable rules," Harry interrupted. "And you are welcome to expel me if we have different views of what rules are reasonable."

McGonagall straightened up and wiped the vomit off her lips with the back of her hand. "We could put them in the Forbidden Forest," she suggested.

IIIIIIIIII

Against his better judgement, Dumbledore led his trump card to a carefully selected spot on the edge of the Forbidden forest and watched as Harry carefully inspected the site carefully before delivering his decision.

"No," the boy said firmly.

"What's wrong with it?" Dumbledore demanded. It was one of the safest spots in the forest sitting as it did on the edge of Hogwarts' wards.

"Not very defensible is it? Come on, let's see what's in this direction."

"What is in that direction, Hagrid?" Dumbledore whispered.

"Nut'n much, jes Aragog and his family."

"What!" Dumbledore rushed to catch up to the boy and his servants.  
"Come on, Hagrid."

They found Harry standing on top of hill at the center of a large clearing, the spasming corpses of a dozen giant spiders littering the ground around them with several living spiders watching from a safe distance.

"Now this has potential," Harry apprized. "Got a natural spring for water, a hill, good fields of fire, and it's fairly close to the castle."

"Not to mention the spiders, master," Min added with a smile.

"Just like home for you, 'eh, Min?"

"Close enough," she agreed. "Without my sisters and with a sky."

"Thought you didn't have any more sisters?"

"The eldest sister wasn't as thorough as she thought she was, apparently I wasn't the only survivor."

"The rest band together to knock your eldest sister off the hill?"

"And then took to infighting, yes, master. One of the reasons I'm never going back." As the youngest, she'd never been able to amass enough resources to challenge her elder siblings, damn them.

"I think we'll take this spot, Dumbledore," Harry announced. "May move it again in the future if I find something better, but that's something to think about later."

"But . . . the spiders," the old wizard said weakly.

"Make it difficult for intruders," Harry agreed. "Might have to take them with me if I decide to move."

"I see."

"Noodnik, set up the keep and then run a path to the main castle. Min, we're going shopping for school supplies."

"Yes, master."

"Be a good elf and we might take a look at what poisons this world has to offer," Harry purred.

"Yes, master, thank you, master!" the Drow squealed.

"Would you like me to make you a portkey to and from Diagon Alley?" Dumbledore asked, determined to put the last few minutes behind him.

"Sure," Harry agreed. "They take gold, right?"

"They do," Dumbledore agreed. "Which reminds me, here is the key to your vault." The Headmaster pulled a key out of his pocket. "Along with a list of school supplies."

"Min."

The Drow took the two items from the wizard. "The portkey?"

"Of course." Dumbledore grabbed a stick off the ground. "Touch it and say 'Alley' to get there and 'back to the castle we go' to get back."

"Noodnik!" Harry barked. "Come with us, you can deal with the path later."v



"Yes, sir."

Harry made a quick check to insure that the others had a hold of the portkey. "Alley."

They arrived on the steps of Gringotts, a large stone building with two spear wielding guards flanking the entrance.

"Ever seen goblins that disciplined?" Harry asked, giving the guards a professional once over.

"Never, master," Min replied. They both ignored the way the guards tightened their grips on their weapons.

"Interesting," Harry agreed. "We can look into it later." He strode up to the counter.

"Key," the goblin growled.

"Min."

She pulled the key out of her pocket and laid it on the counter in front of the suddenly wide eyed goblin.

"Would you care to use the elevators, ma'am?" the goblin squeaked, regarding Harry's servant in the same manner one regards a giant rabid badger. Why in the hell did one of THEM have to come into the bank? More importantly, why did it have to be on his shift and at his desk?

"Master?" Min asked.

"What's the alternative?" Harry prompted.

Two terror filled eyes swiveled onto Harry. "The mine carts, sir. They're quite unpleasant." The hyperventilating goblin nearly shat himself, not only was one of THEM in the bank but SHE was accompanied by a being SHE addressed as master.

"We'll use the elevator," Harry decided. "Noodnik."

"Yes, sir?" the big nosed porter asked.

"How much space do you have?"

"Enough, sir."

"Wonderful." Harry had learned that he didn't want details a long time before. "Lead the way."

"Right this way, sir," the goblin simpered. "Noncore will take you to your vault, sir."

"Beautiful," Harry said happily. "Come along, Min."

"A moment, master." She turned to the goblin. "See that the keys to any vaults belonging to my master are promptly delivered to me, understand?"

"Yes, ma'am," the trembling goblin agreed quickly. "I hear and obey."

Harry spent a few minutes inspecting the contents of the vault before turning to his porter. "Load up everything in the vault, be sure to set any items aside."

"Yes, sir."

"Then I want you to buy everything on the list Dumbledore gave me."

Min pulled the piece of parchment out of her robe and handed it to the man.

"Should I keep an eye out for extras, sir?"

"Yes, use your judgement," Harry ordered. "When you're finished, buy yourself something to eat and drink and then wait for us to get you at the point we arrived."

"Yes, sir."

"Min."

"Yes, master?" The Drow's ears perked up.

"We're going to take a look around, be on your best behavior. That means?"

"No killing anyone without your permission unless they attack us," she recited, ears drooping. In other words, no fun.

"Good girl." Harry grinned. "Now let's get back to that elevator. See if you can get the plans for it, Noodnik."

"Yes, sir."

"Master?" Min said, trying to figure out why he'd be interested in the device.

"Think how much the dwarves would be willing to pay for them," Harry explained.

"Yes, master." The Drow nodded.

They spent the next few minutes strolling through the alley and taking in the sights until they found the entrance to another shopping district.

"You don't want to go in there, lad," the old witch advised. "That's where the darkest of the dark wizards do their business."

"Thank you," Harry replied with a grin. "Hear that, Min?"

"Sounds like an excellent place to get a few more samples for my poison collection!" the dark elf squealed.

"And to make a few contacts," Harry agreed. It didn't take long before they had their first prospect.

"Le' me go!" the pickpocket screamed.

"If he doesn't quiet down in the next thirty seconds, break one of his fingers," Harry ordered. "Then another every ten seconds until he does."

"Which one, master?"

"Dealer's choice," Harry replied.

The grubby boy settled down with three seconds and seven fingers to spare.

"How do I get in touch with your fence?"

"Piss off," the thief murmured sullenly.

"Min, if he refuses to answer another question. Break another finger," Harry ordered.

"What happens when I run out of fingers, master?" the Drow asked, hoping that it would be something good.

"Dazzle me with your creativity." Harry turned his focus back onto the thief. "Well?"

"Back entrance of the third shop on the left, knock three times on the door and ask for Nico."

"Wonderful. Which shop has the best selection of poisons?"

Fifteen minutes and a bit more unpleasantness later; Harry had all the information he wanted and the thief had been released back into his natural habitat. Two hours later, they'd completed their shopping and returned to Gringotts to find Noodnik waiting for them.

"Aren't you going to follow up on anything you learned from the thief, master?" Min asked as the three of them prepared to return to the keep.

"Just wanted to get an idea of how things ran in this world, no plans to take up my first profession," he explained. He turned to his large nosed hench. "Got everything?"

"All but the wand, sir. Shopkeep wouldn't sell that to me."

"Why not?"

"Says that only you can choose it, said it had to do with how your magic reacts to the materials and what not."

Harry let out an annoyed sigh. "Let's get this over with."

"This way, sir."

Harry followed his big nosed henchman to the wand shop and walked through the door.

"Ah, Mr. Potter. I was expecting you, I . . ." Olivander trailed off as he made eye contact with the boy. "What are you?" he demanded harshly.

"I'm Harry Potter," the boy replied. "What are you?"

"You are not Harry Potter," the old wandmaker growled. "Harry is a child and doesn't reek of foreign magics."

"I am an adult that spent a bit of time on another plane," Harry corrected. "How did you know?"

"Olivanders were crafting wands since shortly after the first crops were sowed on this island," the odd man rumbled. "Here for a wand?"

"You wouldn't sell it to my man," Harry agreed.

It took a few minutes of trial and error, but Harry was eventually the proud new owner of one magic wand.

"Any chance of getting a spare?" Harry asked mildly.

"Wait until your magic has stabilized in say . . . three years, try to keep the one you've got intact until then." Olivander smiled suddenly. "I don't suppose you have any wand components from the other world, do you?"

"That all depends," Harry said thoughtfully.

"On what?"

"On what you're offering," Harry began the negotiations.

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The Deputy Headmistress was waiting at the gates when they arrived back from their shopping trip. It did not appear that the woman had been there long, suggesting that she either had a few spies in the Alley or some connection to the wards along with a quick way to get out.

"Mr. Potter," she greeted the boy. "The road we are standing on leads to a magical town named Hogsmead. As you are not a normal student, you may feel free to spend as much of your free time in Hogsmead as you like. I would like to request that you . . ." Her eyes locked onto the obscene dagger on the boy's belt. "Care to explain that, Mr. Potter?" Minerva barked, giving him her patented naughty student look number three.

Harry raised an inquisitive eyebrow. "Explain what?" he asked, honestly bewildered by the woman's sudden change in tone.

"Your dirk," she clarified. "More specifically, the handle?"

Harry's eyebrows raised. "It's ebony, I'll agree that the platinum inlays are a bit ostentatious but nothing I can't afford. Guess I should have gone for something more gaudy to show off my station to the inbred rabble that couldn't recognize the wood, but I wanted something functional."

"That's not . . ." She took a deep breath. "Why is it shaped like a man's . . . ah . . ." the old woman colored. "Genitalia."

"I don't know," Harry admitted, it wasn't something he'd ever thought about. "Why do you ask?"

"I think it's more of that prudishness, master," Min spoke up, finding the whole situation endlessly amusing.

"Bollock daggers are common enough where I got this so as not to merit comment," Harry informed the head of Gryffindor House. "I got it because experience has taught me to always have a dagger on my belt." And another up his sleeve, sometimes a third and a fourth hidden elsewhere on his body.

"I see." Minerva frowned.

"I've had it for ten years and I'm not going to stop carrying it," Harry continued. "Magic is wonderful but there is no way in hell that I'm going to depend solely on magic for my defense. This dagger is the only thing I have that I can use in this body, give me a year or two and I'll be able to carry a sword again. Till then . . ." he trailed off.

"Isn't there another dagger you could use?" Minerva asked hopefully.

"No. And I'm not going to get a new one." Not after all the time he'd spent enchanting the one he already had.

"I see." Minerva sighed, she hated cultural misunderstandings. "Would you consent to putting a notice me not charm on it?"

"What is a notice me not charm?" Harry demanded. "Please tell me it's what I think it is."

"It's a charm that makes it difficult to notice whatever it's cast on," Minerva lectured. "It only works so long as you don't draw any attention to the object you're trying to hide."

Harry's eyes were shining, this had potential. "Do you mind casting it on a few things for me?"

"Not at all," Minerva replied, happy that things had been cleared up. "I would like to add that I am almost always willing to lend a hand to one of my students." She raised her wand and hit the dagger with a quick charm.

"Thank you." Harry grinned widely. "The other things are back at the keep. Please allow us to host you for dinner some night, we can take care of any further enchantment then."

"I would be delighted to accept and I will be sure to contact your elf later to arrange things." She resisted the urge to blush, superimposing the face of the man she'd met onto the boy he'd become.

"Now, back to the original conversation. I believe you had a request for me?"

"Yes, that's right. I was hoping that you would be willing to be a bit discrete. Either avoiding Hogsmead when the students are given a free weekend or acting as if you'd snuck out of the castle."

"That should not pose any difficulties," Harry agreed. "Was there anything else?"

"That is all I wished to address," Minerva replied. "Thank you for your time, Mr. Potter."

"Any time, Professor."

Harry spent the weeks before school building his list of local contacts and establishing himself in the forest as a being much too powerful to annoy. It was all very boring to the former Mercenary Captain and it was a bit of a relief when the school year finally started.

"Hmmm, interesting," the Hat mumbled. "You certainly understand loyalty, or you'd have never risen to become the commander of a free company. You value knowledge, or you'd have never agreed to come here. You're cunning, oh my you're cunning. More Slytherin than Salazar himself. And as for courage, your balls are so big that fate



has given you a Drow servant to help you carry them around. So it had better be . . . Gryffindor!" the Hat finished loudly.

"If you share my secrets with anyone, I'll kill them and destroy you."

"Your secrets are gone," the Hat replied. "I can't remember anything that happened during a sorting past the sorting."

"Beautiful." Harry snapped his fingers. "Min, attend me."

"What do you need, master?"

"Check the food," Harry ordered. "We're eating at the castle today."

"If it's poisoned, then it's not with anything I recognize," the elf reported. "I'd advise you to let the children eat for a few minutes before you start yourself, I'll keep an eye out to see if any of them begin to show any symptoms." She regarded the food with a curled lip. "I would also advise you to have me bring a packed lunch unless you'd rather trudge back to the keep for your mid-day meal."

"Do it," Harry agreed. He'd served in several armies, he'd spent time in prison, he'd served on ships, he'd attended the mage's academy, he'd lived on the streets, he'd thought he knew what bad food was until he'd arrived at Hogwarts. Bland, fatty, and boring was the order of the day. "Never thought I'd long for a good fat rat," he mused.

"They are quite good with the correct spices, Master," Min agreed. "Perhaps it would be best to skip a meal, master? I picked up some local ingredients that look promising."

"Oh, like what?" Harry asked, curious about what his Drow would consider promising local goods.

"Several new varieties of mushroom, some bright red berries with the most marvelous burning taste, and a strange animal covered in needles. Other than that, master, we still have enough stores to last two dozen men through a protracted siege."

Neither noticed the curious frown that appeared on a young bushy haired girl as she listened to them speak. In the coming weeks, neither would notice the attention that same bushy haired girl paid to Harry's Drow assistant. But none of that is important, not yet anyway.

Harry spent the next few days in a blissful haze of study. The new magic system seemed to be a fascinating blend of sorcery and normal wizardry, but the energy was totally different. His head spun as he tried to think of a way to classify it. Everything was so . . . so . . . spells that should have been monstrously difficult were being taught to children. Other spells, similar to simple cantrips, weren't taught till the seventh year. It is therefore unsurprising that Harry approached his potions class with a sense of eager anticipation, an anticipation that couldn't compare to his servant's.

"Please hurry, Master," Min begged. "I would like to get a seat at the front of the room." And she was fairly sure that he wouldn't allow her to evict any children stupid enough to take her preferred spot. "Do you think the professor will teach us how to make a deadly poison on the first day?"

"I wouldn't expect it," Harry replied. "That seems like the sort of thing they'd save for later." More's the pity, he could have used a couple deadly poisons the last time he was this age.

They claimed their seats and did not have long to wait until the resident Potions Master swept into the room.

"Welcome to potions, one of the most rewarding and difficult subjects taught at Hogwarts." Snape allowed his gaze to sweep the room. "It is here that I will attempt to teach you an art in which the slightest mistake could turn a benign sleeping potion into the deadliest poison."

"Looks like you might be in luck, Min," Harry whispered to his excited servant.

"Ah, Mr. Potter. Our latest celebrity," Snape purred, giddy at the chance to give the insults he'd spent so much time practicing. At least an hour in the mirror every night before bed, one of the benefits of

having no social life to speak of was that it gave him a lot of time for other things.

"Damn bards," Harry interrupted. "A pox on all of them." Harry fingered the hilt of his dagger, he disliked them in the best of times. What he'd heard since he'd arrived back in his home dimension had inspired him to levels of fury that were almost biblical in proportion.

"I . . . what?" Snape stared at the boy. "What bards?"

"The bastards that have been spreading that cock and bull story about surviving a death curse," Harry replied hotly. "Whoever first came up with that stupid story had better pray to their god that I don't find out their identity or we'll find out just how long they can live without their skin."

"Uh . . ." things weren't going the way he'd planned, time to improvise. "What kind of potion would you use to cure a broken arm?"

"Mid-level healing potion after setting the bone," Harry replied automatically. "Assuming you don't have a healer of some sort with you already."

"What's in a mid-level healing potion?" for that matter, what in the hell was a mid-level healing potion?

"Not so good at brewing them myself," Harry admitted. "Never was my subject and since then I've always had someone to make them for me. Min." He held out his hand.

"Here you are, master." She handed the boy a glowing green vial of viscus liquid which was promptly passed off to Snape.

Snape popped off the cap and gave an experimental sniff. "I don't know this potion," he muttered. Distracted, the man took the vial back to his desk for a bit of rigorous testing.

They spent the next half hour watching Snape conduct test after test while muttering excitedly to himself until Harry checked his new watch,

something he thought was an amazing device. "Time for us to go to the next class, Min."

"But master, he didn't even teach us how to make any poisons," the elf whined. It wasn't fair, she'd looked forward to the class so much.

"On the board," Snape spoke up absently, still totally focused on the potion in his hands. "Stir clockwise and you get a boil remover, stir the other way and it will cause you a horrible death if you ingest it. You can counteract the effects with oil of cloves."

Min carefully copied down the instructions before accompanying Harry to the next class. She loved Potions.

To the drow's intense (and vocal) disappointment, none of the other classes were nearly as instructive as their first Potions lesson. Harry on the other hand, was fascinated by transfigurations.

"Wonderful." Harry clapped in appreciation after Minerva's demonstration. "How long did it take you to learn to transform yourself into a house cat?"

"Two years," the Professor replied. "And it's not something I'd advise any of you to try doing until at least fifth year, seventh would be better."

"How did you chose what creature's form to take, can you take other forms, how long can you stay transformed?"

"The house cat is my inner animal, I did not choose it. I am unable to transfigure myself into other forms by that method. I can remain in the form of a house cat as long as I like," Minerva rattled off the answers. "Was there anything else?"

"Is there any way of detecting transformed persons and if so, is there any way I could convince you to drop by the house later to put up some of those protections?"

"There is a spell I can teach you later," Minerva replied. "It will take me some time before I could find the right wards, that's more Albus' area than mine."

"Drop by anyway," Harry offered smoothly. "I've got a few ideas I'd like to get your input on."

"Seven good for you?" Minerva asked, trying to keep her voice professional.

"Perfect," Harry agreed.

Minerva spent a few minutes making sure the students had enough theory shoved down their throats before moving onto her next demonstration and the practical portion of the lesson.

"How long does the transfiguration last?" Harry asked eagerly.

"It can last up to a year depending on the amount of power put into it and the skill of the person performing the transfiguration," Minerva replied. "For non living material anyway, living is a bit more complex."

"You can transfigure living material?" Harry asked in shock, he hadn't gotten his first polymorph spell till his third year in the academy.

"Easily," Minerva agreed. "We'll start next week."

"I look forward to it." Harry pulled out his wand and got to work, this new system of magic was different enough that being an apprentice again was fascinating.

Harry was still considering the implications of his transfiguration lesson later that day when his lunch was interrupted by the self styled 'Prince of Slytherin'.

"Think you're so great, don't you?" Draco growled with a deep sneer.

"What do you want?" Harry didn't bother looking up, he did however put a restraining hand on his Drow's thigh under the table, saving the boy's life.

"Let's see how brave you are tonight." Draco smirked. "Meet me in the trophy room at midnight."

"Why would I want to do that?" Harry looked up from his boxed lunch.

"For a duel," Draco blustered. "Unless you're a coward."

"Make it the edge of the Forbidden Forest," Harry replied. "I'd rather not go up all those stairs to the trophy room."

"Fine," Draco spat. The boy spun on his heel and stalked back to his table.

"Are you going to bother showing up, Master?"

"I'll put up a few wards to tell me if young Draco decides to make an appearance," Harry replied. "I see no reason to be out in the cold waiting for him."

"You don't think he will show?"

"Do you?" Harry countered.

"No, master. If he thought he could defeat you in a duel then he would want witnesses," she replied. "You think he'll send a group of assassins?"

"I think he'll send a teacher," Harry laughed. "He's just a child."

"I wasn't more than twenty years old when I hired my first assassin," the Drow huffed. Barely out of diapers in her race's terms.

"Not all of us are as advanced as you are," Harry soothed the angry elf.

"How old were you, master?" she challenged.

"About the same age, didn't have the money to hire assassins before that and had to do all my killing myself."

"Much more satisfying that way, master," she agreed.

"More work too."

Several hours later, Harry looked up from a book as the wards he'd placed at what was to be the site of his duel alerted him to a breach.

"Looks like young Draco did decide to send a teacher," Harry said with a grin.

"Should have come with his shadows to try to jump you," Min critiqued.

"Doubt he had the nerve to do anything with you around," Harry murmured. "He's not suicidal."

"True." The Drow preened a bit. "Not one of the primitives in this castle is a match for a being of my stature, master."

"Watch out for the professors," Harry advised as he went back to his book. "Masters of a strange discipline of magic are always something to be wary of."

"Yes, master," she agreed. "If there's trouble, which ones would you recommend we kill first?"

"Flitwick and Dumbledore in that order," Harry replied. "The Potions master and Minerva would be my second two, Minerva first maybe?" He scratched his chin, looked like he had some planning to do. "We'll talk about it later, after we've had a chance to gather more information."

Life at Hogwarts quickly fell into a routine of classes and childish taunts from his 'rival' Draco. That routine was broken after a few weeks when the Defense Professor ran into the Great Hall and breathlessly delivered a warning.

"Troll in the castle!" the Professor screamed. "I thought you'd like to know." His message delivered, the man passed away in a dead faint.

"Wake him up, Min," Harry ordered.

"He's not out, master," the woman purred. "His breathing hasn't changed." Not to mention the way the bastard had fallen, it was like he had no pride as an actor at all.

"Then kick him till he gets up," Harry amended. "I want to know where this troll is."

It only took three broken ribs and a punctured lung before the man was willing to come to long enough to reveal the troll's last location. A couple more kicks to the head put him back out, for real this time, and several more dramatically improved the Drow's mood. The best time to kick someone was when they were down.

"Do you wish to take care of the troll yourself, master?" Min asked curiously and a bit worried that he would consider such a thing without being well compensated in advance.

"I wish to watch the fight," Harry replied. It would be an excellent chance to study the combat tactics of the native mages. "Be sure to snag us some snacks and drinks."

"I shall, master," she agreed in relief, that sounded more like her master.

Harry ignored the pandemonium erupting around him as he strolled out of the Great Hall to observe how the local magic users dealt with vermin in their castles. It didn't take long for them to find their quarry.

The troll took a good hard look at the young boy calmly drinking a tasty beverage out of a tall glass and his Drow servant before an atavistic shudder racked his frame and he quickly decided that he wanted no part of the pair. With a subdued bellow, it carefully backed down the hall and around the corner.

"Do you hear sobbing?" Min asked.



"They don't make trolls like they used to," Harry sighed. "Let me tell you about this troll I ran into when I was first starting out, he had a club made out of a hundred year oak and arms as big around as a wagon wheel."

"No, master, I mean do you hear sobbing coming from that door?"

"See what it is," Harry ordered.

"Then we can get back to your story, master," Min agreed. She walked into the bathroom and found a small girl sobbing her eyes out. "Why are you crying?" the Drow demanded.

"R . . . Ron Weasley c-called me a know it all with no friends," Hermione sobbed.

"So?" Min fought down the urge to slap the girl. "If someone crosses you, you don't get mad or upset."

"What do you do then?" Hermione asked as she wiped away her tears and realized the fearless young woman who hung around Potter was the one talking to her, the woman that was everything Hermione aspired to be. Beautiful, intelligent, and presumably magically powerful or else they'd have never assigned her to be the bodyguard of the boy-who-lived.

"You get even, you make them pray for death and curse the moment they crossed you," Min replied matter of factly. "Understand?"

"B-but the rules..."

"Is Dumbledore not the master of this school? Do you think he got the position because he was weak? All that matters is how strong and smart you are. The purpose of rules is to provide a challenge to enforcing your will on others without getting caught breaking them. The more complicated the rules the smarter you have to be, otherwise we'd have morons for leaders." Min shook her head in disgust, why in the hell hadn't the child already learned this from her parents?

"I understand," Hermione agreed, a smile formed on the girl's face as she contemplated what she could . . . no would do to the ginger haired bastard. "Thank you."

"Don't mention it." Min waved off the girl's thanks. "Now, you should probably be running along. There's a troll loose in the castle and we wouldn't want you to be killed before you could get your vengeance now would we?"

Hermione gave a terrified squeak before darting off down the hall in the direction of the Gryffindor tower.

"Thank god I was never like that," Harry laughed.

"Oh?" They began walking down the hall after the troll. "I always pictured you as the bookish type at that age."

"I was fresh off the streets and in the guild the last time I was this age," Harry reminisced. "There was this crazy old drunk named . . . Gino, I think, who liked to disappear young boys. Sometimes they'd end up with their throats cut in the sewer, sometimes they'd end up gelded and sold into slavery. Well after he was done with them and on the occasions that he had enough self control to remember that they were valuable to other people."

"Gino take an interest in you?"

"The look of shock on his face when I slid my two copper dagger into his kidney was priceless," Harry's laughter filled the hallway. "And the gold in his pockets payed my admission fee to the guild. Memories."

He'd been half tempted to geld Gino himself and sell him into slavery, profit and irony were a winning combination. In the end, he'd decided he liked the idea of not leaving a live enemy behind more than he'd liked the thought of a couple extra coppers and a good laugh. The watch had found Gino at the bottom of a cess pit with his own genitals shoved in his mouth the following year. It had been a far too advanced state of decomposition for anyone to make an identification by then, not that anyone would have cared to.

"Bet they weren't happy to find out you weren't some merchant or nobleman's son who could bribe his way through, master?" Min giggled, adding her lyrical laughter to his.

"Not especially," Harry agreed. "Lucky they couldn't kick me out when I was at the top of the class."

"The other students didn't get angry you were showing them up, master?" It's what would have happened in Drow society, the number two would be measuring the number one's back for a dagger, the number three the number two, and so on.

"They couldn't do anything about it. None of them had the power to knock me down or a large enough bribe to make it worth my while, youth." Pity their parents hadn't given them more pocket money, would have certainly made his life more comfortable.

"Wasted on the young, master," Min agreed.

"Fortunate for us that we got it back," Harry pointed out. "I . . ." the familiar sound of someone screaming in horrible pain cut him off. "Think we had better catch up to that troll if we want to see any of the fight."

They arrived to find the Head of Hufflepuff House on the ground with the troll looming over her, club raised to deliver a lethal strike.

"Damn." A sudden thought occurred, cementing Harry's next action. He muttered a few words under his breath and a bolt of lightning sprang from the tips of his fingers to strike the troll, saving the Herbology Professor's life. "Check the troll."

"Still alive, master," Min reported as a dagger appeared in her hand.

"Don't kill it!" Harry said quickly.

Min shot the boy a look of utter confusion. "Master?"

"Trolls regenerate," Harry explained with a grin.

"I'm afraid that I still don't understand, master," Min said in shame. He had a look on his face that hinted at something good.

"That's because you grew up in a noble house," Harry laughed. "Troll parts should be worth quite a bit to the right buyers. If we've got a living troll, then we can harvest the same parts over and over again thanks to its ability to regenerate."

The drow gave a startled squeak. Every time she thought she had her master pegged, he'd do something like this to remind her why she'd stayed with him.

"Like it, then?"

"It's brilliant, master," she bubbled.

"Take its arms off at the shoulders and its legs off at the hips," Harry ordered. He looked down at the fallen Professor. "We can discuss what you owe me for saving your life later."

"I've got a couple plants that you might want to cultivate around that keep of yours," Sprout wheezed. "They eat intruders and they can be harvested for valuable potions ingredients."

"That'll do," Harry agreed. "Finished, Min?"

"I am, Master."

"Good, let's get it to the dungeon before its limbs regenerate."

"Yes, master."

To Harry's intense disappointment, the troll did not show any signs of regeneration, no matter what they did to encourage it, it stubbornly refused to heal itself. In the end, he decided to cut his losses.

"Try not to damage it too much, we can still sell parts of it if they're in good enough condition," Harry said after a moment of thought. "And have fun."

"I will, master," she giggled as she skipped down the stairs to end the very unfortunate troll. Perhaps she could harvest the parts of it while it was still alive? Maybe make a game of it, see how much of the creature she could render before it died. The Drow girl grinned, sometimes the best games were the simplest, a pity she didn't have one of her sisters here so she could share it with them.

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The Gryffindor first year boys were awoken early the next morning by a high pitched scream followed soon by two more and then a gurgle. Slowly, cautiously, they crept out of their bunks to investigate. What they found would chill them to the bone.

Ron was trembling uncontrollably in a puddle of his own filth; his lips were stained with vomit and his sheets were soiled by the fluids he'd been expelling from both ends. An almost visible miasma of tainted air contaminated the space around the boy's bunk and was slowly creeping to befoul the rest of the room.

Surprisingly, it was Neville that spurred the others into action. Motivated mostly by his desire to get away from the hideous stench, he had a flash of inspiration. "You get Madame Pomfrey, I'll get McGonagall." Without another word, the boy rushed out of the room and into the fresh air the rest of the castle promised.

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Minerva arrived to find that the school Healer had beaten her to the scene, people joked that Poppy could outrun lightning when there was a medical emergency.

"What's wrong with him?" Minerva asked in concern.

Poppy shook her head in wonder. "I don't know," the healer admitted. "Whoever did this is . . . I don't even know how they did this."

"Did what?" McGonagall prompted.

"They somehow managed to put two hundred low level hexes on the boy, what's more they got the hexes to . . . meld together, for lack of a better term." Poppy couldn't take her eyes off the prone form of Ronald Weasley. "My god, it looks like they're all feeding off his magic to power themselves. Fascinating."

"What do I tell his family?"

"That he angered the wrong person," Poppy replied absently. "Fascinating," she repeated.

"Can you fix him?" McGonagall decided to cut to the chase.

"I've already called for specialists from St. Mungos," Poppy replied, avoiding the question.

IIIIIIII

Hermione wasn't sure why but the breakfast the school served seemed especially good that morning until she realized that the news that her vengeance had been successful had proved to be the perfect accompaniment, the most succulent spice. When her meal had finished, she closed her eyes and listened to the students gossiping about the fate of Ronald Weasley, the boy who'd been foolish enough to call her names. The feeling was wonderful, almost addicting.

When the students began leaving the table, Hermione decided that it was time to put her next plan into action. Gathering up her things, she walked to the main entrance and found a comfortable place to wait for her prospective mentor to return to the school.

One second after the door opened to admit Harry and his shadow, Hermione was by their side.

"Is there something I can help you with?" Harry asked curiously.

"I'd like to talk to Min for a bit in private," Hermione replied to the boy. She turned a worshipful gaze on the elf. "If you've got a minute."

"Master?" the elf asked, not sure what to do.

"Do what you like," Harry replied. "I'll wait for you outside the charms classroom if you want to speak with her."

"I'll be there soon, master," Min promised. She looked down at the girl. "What do you want?"

"I wanted to get some more lessons from you," Hermione replied. "I avenged myself on Weasley for saying I didn't have any friends like you told me."

"Good, what did you do to him?" The Drow folded her arms, at least one of the human brats had some sense.

"Nothing much," Hermione admitted. "I don't know much magic yet, so I just cast every hex and curse I could find on him."

"They won't interfere with each other will they? Sometimes it's better to take your time no matter how satisfying a quick vengeance would be, it's always far more satisfying to have a thorough vengeance no matter how long it may take," Min advised.

"I figured out how to get them to work together," Hermione said with a blush.

Min regarded the girl for a moment before coming to a sudden decision. "Give me your notes later and I will ask my master to give his opinion. He is much more knowledgeable about magic than I am."

"Why do you call him master?" Hermione asked, a bit confused on why such a strong woman would demean herself in such a way.

"Because he is my master, I am his in every way," the Drow replied.

"But . . . but slavery is wrong," the girl sputtered. "How could you let him keep you like that?"

"Wrong?" Min's eyes narrowed. "Is not my master the strongest of them all?" She demanded. "Does he not have great skill at arms and magic?"

"I suppose," Hermione agreed. "But it's still not right to make you his slave."

"It is the natural right of the strong to dominate the weak," Min retorted. "As you grow, you will learn that there are two types in the world; the powerful and their slaves. My master is strong, perhaps the strongest, therefore I am his by right of conquest. There is no shame in submitting to those you can not overcome so long as the one you submit to is a worthy master such as my own. Do you understand?"

"The strong controlling the weak is natural law," Hermione stated uncertainly.

"Exactly," Min agreed. "Why is it that your parents have not already given you these lessons?"

"They don't spend a lot of time with me," Hermione admitted. "Always busy with other things."

"I see." A shame the girl had gotten so old without learning the true ways of the world, she had such potential.

"Will you teach me?" Hermione asked hopefully.

IIIIIIIIII

Ron had been moved into the Hospital Wing by the time specialists from St. Mungos had arrived. The Healers immediately clustered around Ron's bed, casting a variety of diagnostic charms.

"If you look, the flatulence hex is tied to the incontinence hex, which in turn is tied to the bladder control curse. Removing one would cause the other two to go out of control. Amazing," the St. Mungos' healer murmured. "Truly amazing."

"We've got an article in the Lancet for sure," Poppy murmured. "Possibly a book."

"Do we know the caster?" one of the other Healers asked.



Poppy shook her head. "No, but I do have a couple of suspects."

"Talk the Head of House into offering amnesty and anonymity if the perpetrator steps forward," the Chief Healer suggested.

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Minerva hadn't liked it, but she'd eventually agreed to the Healer's idea of offering an amnesty if the guilty party, or parties, were willing to explain what they'd done. She heard a knock on the door.

"Come in," Minerva called out.

"You wanted to speak with us, Professor?" George asked.

"Yes, sit down," Minerva agreed. "Do you know why I've called you here?"

"For once, we can honestly say no," Fred replied.

"Don't even have anything in the planning stage," George agreed. "Well-"

"-aside from stealing a toilet seat for our sister," Fred admitted.

"So you're saying that you had nothing to do with the fact that your younger brother is stuck in the hospital wing?" Minerva said sharply. "Boys, I'm going to offer you a deal. Come clean and explain how you did what you did and I'll be willing to forgo punishment this time."

"Wasn't us, Professor-" George said.

"-really," Fred agreed. "Can see how you'd think it was."

"Wish we could take credit, but we really are innocent this time," George admitted, looking embarrassed by the fact.

"Got an idea of who it might ha' been though," Fred added.

"Who?" Minerva asked.

"Can't say-

"-professional ethics, you know."

The twins glanced at each other in silent communication for a few moments before a decision was reached.

"We'll ha' a talk with our suspect," George offered.

"Providing you let us look at the Healer's notes," Fred said quickly.  
"Copies would be better."

"Always good to bring something to trade when you want something from someone," George explained.

"I'll see what I can do," Minerva said, lips pursed.

"Thanks, Professor," the twins replied.

"Regarding that toilet seat," Minerva growled. "I absolutely forbid you from stealing the one from the toilet in the west corridor by the old Astronomy tower."

"Alright, Professor," the twins agreed.

"And be sure to wash it first, don't want your sister catching anything, do you?" Minerva added.

IIIIIIII

Min walked into the room and knelt before her master's throne, then bowed down to press her forehead to the carpet.

"What do you want?" Harry asked calmly. The follow up question would have been, what did you do?

"I have brought something I wish you to examine, master," Min replied.

"Get up and hand it over," Harry ordered.

"Yes, master." She handed him a thick stack of parchment. "Notes on a small matter of vengeance, master."

"Very neat handwriting," Harry murmured as he began glancing through them. "Interesting, very interesting." He looked up and met his elf's eyes. "Get me paper and something to write with."

"Yes, master," she agreed, hurrying to fetch the items. "Have I brought you something of value?"

"Possibly," Harry allowed. He looked through the notes, occasionally making a notation or comment on the paper Min had brought. "Whoever thought this up did a good job, what year were they in?"

"First, master," Min replied.

"Scion of a great house?"

"I do not believe so, master. I can find out."

Harry considered his servant for a few minutes. "Keep an eye on this one."

"Master?" This was not how she expected him to act.

"Your new pet has potential, depends on if she thought this up herself or had help." The thought that his drow would lower herself to aid a male never crossed his mind. "So keep an eye on her and bring me news if she does anything else interesting."

"Yes, master. Have I pleased you?" She licked her lips.

"You have, but it will still be a couple years till I can show you how much," he said regretfully.

"Yes, master." The drow drooped a bit, going through puberty the first time hadn't been fun. Going through it a second time was pure hell, especially now that she knew exactly what she was missing.

IIIIIIIIII

Hermione squeaked nervously when Gryffindor's most notorious pranksters took the chairs across from her in the library. This was one of those situations she'd read about, the kind that had the potential to go really really bad in a heartbeat.

"Got a minute?" the left twin asked.

"What do you want?" Hermione growled, hoping her voice hadn't betrayed the nervousness she was feeling about the confrontation with her victim's older brothers.

"To offer our congratulations," the right twin replied.

"Good prank you pulled on our brother," the left agreed. "Bit harsh, but sometimes you got to be harsh."

"No helping it," right twin said sagely.

Hermione chose to remain silent, confining her response to a sharp glare modeled after the one she'd seen her Head of House use the day before.

"Also thought we'd pass on a message," Left twin said suddenly. "McGonagall is offering amnesty if the perpetrator steps forward."

"So you know," right twin added. "We'd also like a look at your notes sometime."

"And we'd be happy to give peek a look at ours in return," left twin offered. The two twins stood up. "Glad we could have this chat."

"Come to us if our brother starts acting like a berk again," right twin said.

"We'll sort 'im out for you, no problem," the left promised.

Hermione's thoughts were whirling, what should she do? She really needed to speak with Min, there was no one else she could think of that would be both willing and able to explain what was going on.

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Minerva took a moment to straighten up her robes before using the door knocker to announce her presence.

"The master of the keep is waiting for you on the second level," Harry's big nosed porter said. "Just go up the stairs."

"Thank you," Minerva replied. She brushed past the man and walked up the stairs.

"Minerva," Harry said with a smile. "Glad you could make it."

"I did promise," the woman replied. "I'd also like to get your opinion on something."

"Of course," he agreed. "Min, food." He turned back to Minerva. "What is it you'd like me to look at?"

"I have a student in the hospital under a very interesting set of hexes," Minerva replied. She handed the boy a file. "Here's the healer's report."

"Interesting," Harry muttered. "What would you like me to do?"

"I'd appreciate any input you could give," Minerva replied.

"Potentially quite a bit," Harry admitted. "Is the boy's life in any immediate danger?"

"It is not," Minerva replied. "The healers are mystified and I'm looking for solutions wherever I can find them." She laughed. "I've even been persuaded to offer amnesty to the perpetrator."

"I see." Harry rubbed his chin. "Give me twenty four hours and I'll see what I can do for you."

"Thank you, Harry."

"Happy to help, Minerva."

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Hermione was waiting by the front door for Min to arrive the next morning, anxious to speak with her mentor about the encounter with the Weasley twins the previous day.

The Drow smiled when she saw her new pet. "Master, may I have a moment?"

"Take as long as you like," Harry agreed. "Transfigurations today."

"I shall return to your side as quickly as possible, master," Min promised. She walked up to the girl. "You wish to speak with me?"

"I do," Hermione agreed. "Something happened yesterday."

"Oh?"

Hermione relayed the details of the previous day's encounter. "So what do you think?" she finished.

"It is only natural that they thank you," Min laughed. "You have done them a great favor by pointing out a weakness in their bloodline. It is still possible that they will seek to punish you, just to drive home the idea that their family is not to be trifled with. But for the moment, I would assume their offer of alliance to be genuine."

"I guess that makes sense," Hermione agreed. "Thank you, Min."

"It is nothing. For now, I have a couple questions to ask you on behalf of my master. The first, did you have any aid when you crafted your vengeance?"

"No, I did all the work myself." Hermione's shoulders drooped. "Ron was right about me not having any friends."

"Spare no thought to those who are beneath you," Min advised. "Your Head of House came to my master last night and expressed admiration for the job you did on your foe."

"She did?" Hermione asked, disbelief coloring her features.

"Of course. She has also offered a general amnesty for your actions." Min smiled at the look on the girls face. "Did I not tell you that rules were obstacles to filter the weak from the strong?"

"I didn't realize she'd be so open about it," Hermione admitted.

"It just goes to show how impressed she was," Min explained. "My master has suggested that you avoid revealing your role at this point in time. I would advise that you follow my master's suggestion."

"What should I do then?" Hermione asked.

"My master has asked you to devise a cure for what you did to the Weasley. He is curious to see if you have the ability or if your previous work was a fluke."

"How long do I have?" Hermione asked.

"The amount of time you need is part of the test," Min replied. "Impress my master we will go to the next step."

"Okay," Hermione agreed. "I . . . I'll try to have something done by lunch."

"You must also construct the cure in the same way you constructed your vengeance, without drawing attention to yourself. You must use obscurity to avoid notice of the other students, marking yourself as a significant threat at this stage could potentially be a very bad thing. The weaker powers may seek to eliminate you before you are able to work your way into a position where you could become a threat to them," Min advised.

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Harry was in his second class of the day, History of Magic, when one of the Gryffindor Prefects stuck her head in and called him out into the hall.

"Yes?" he asked, unnerving the older girl with his too calm eyes.

"Headmaster wants to speak with you in his office," the girl replied. "Password is ceveo. Do you know how to get there?"

"I do not," Harry replied.

"This way," she said, setting off in a brisk pace.

"Come along, Min," Harry said.

"Right behind you, master."

It did not take long to reach their destination and, to the Prefect's consternation, Harry spent several minutes examining the gargoyle before he was willing to go up the stairs to his meeting.

"You called?" Harry asked neutrally, glancing at the unfamiliar blond man.

"Yes," Dumbledore agreed. "This is Lucius Malfoy," Dumbledore introduced the man.

"Young Draco's father?" Harry asked.

"I am," Lucius confirmed.

"Wonderful son you've got," Harry said grandly. "His schemes are a bit simplistic, but you can't really expect much from them at that age."

"What?" Lucius said dumbly.



"Little scamp tried to use a fake duel to lure me out of my bed after curfew so that the staff would get me," Harry explained with a grin. "Pretty good for a child."

"Yes, well . . ." Lucius trailed off as he remembered the reason for his visit. "I'm told you have a house elf named Min. Something forbidden by the Hogwarts rules and regulations. The penalty for breaking them is confiscation or expulsion."

"Just how old is that rule?" Harry countered.

"I believe that the ink should be dry in a few minutes," Lucius replied.

"Ha! Please tell me that was Draco's plan," Harry begged.

"The basics of it," Lucius agreed, a bit put off by how things were going. "It's a bit less ambitious than the one he gave me . . ."

"But you also have less power than he thinks you do," Harry finished. "Thinking their father is the best and most powerful man in the world is a commonly held belief in sons, at least sons with decent fathers."

"Thank you." Lucius inclined his head. "What is your choice?"

"What choice?"

"Expulsion or confiscation," Lucius persisted.

"Neither," Harry replied. "I don't have a house elf."

"You do have an elf, do you not?"

"I do."

"Then I fail to see how you're going to get out of this without . . ."

"Ah, but she's not my house elf," Harry interjected.

"What is she then?"

"She's my bed elf," Harry replied with a grin.

"Was and will be again, master," Min spoke up.

Lucius jumped when the figure seemed to materialize out of the shadows behind him.

"It doesn't take you humans that long to mature, does it?" she asked hopefully.

"I should be good to go in two or three years," Harry assured her. "Now back to the business at hand. The appropriate response for this should be ... Min?" Harry asked.

"Flensing of the penis, using shards of bone removed from the corpses of everyone he ever loved, followed by having his heart ripped out while we send his soul screaming to the abyss," Min said thoughtfully, knowing that Harry had only asked her opinion so she could make an impression.

Malfoy's eyes widened and his grip tightened on his cane.

"Dear, think subtle opening move in a dominance game between friends or relatives... He is my cousin after all."

"Oh!" Min smiled. "Kidnap his second favorite concubine and serve her to him at a dinner held in his honor."

Harry opened his mouth and paused, "OK that one is tempting, but I was thinking of something a tad more friendly ... So I win of course, but so it looks like Lucius won to Draco, after all we do want to encourage the boy."

Lucius wasn't sure what to think, Harry Potter was nothing like what he expected. Facing Potter was like facing a more thoughtful Voldemort with a sense of humor and his elf made Bellatrix look like Professor Sprout.

Harry spoke a word that made Lucius wince, as it seemed to drill straight through his ears and into his brain, bypassing his occlumency

shields. "Cousin? Give me one of your house elves," Harry said and Lucius, who was able to throw off the Imperious curse, found he couldn't resist.

"Dobby," Lucius commanded and with a pop a small greenish brown creature resembling a brownie arrived.

"Yes's, Master Malfoy?" the creature dressed in rags asked.

"You are now, Harry Potter's elf."

Dobby's eyes widened in wonder.

"And since the Malfoys have recently passed a law saying a house elf cannot legally be owned by a Hogwarts student I must regretfully let you go. I'm sure working for Hogwarts will be fulfilling," Harry promised.

"Nicely done, Master," Min said with a smirk. "He tried to take away your house elf so you cost him one of his, but he can tell Draco that he gave you an elf, because Malfoys always win even if they have to pay the cost themselves. A little speech about thinking Draco is mature enough to handle you without help and we should expect to see a marked improvement from your cousin's usual plans."

IIIIIIII

Hermione was bouncing up and down with excitement when she found Min ten minutes after lunch period had started.

"Figured it out?" the Drow asked.

"Yeah," Hermione agreed. "I think I also figured out a way to make it look like he was cured but to keep the hexes dormant. If I'm right, I could bring them back any time I wanted."

"Good work," Min complimented the girl. "I would suggest keeping that in reserve for the time being until after you perfect it."

"Okay," Hermione agreed.

"Go to lunch, enjoy your meal, I will take your notes to my master."

IIIIIIII

Narcissa entered the sitting room and was surprised that Lucius was sitting there nursing a firewhiskey. The bottle was still about three quarter full, but their open bottle had at best been half full yesterday. While both of them enjoyed a glass or two in the evening, it was very unusual for Lucius to drink more. In fact he hadn't since the Dark Lord lost.

Lucius looked at her. "Can you bear another heir?"

She looked at him wide eyed. They had agreed before their marriage that one child was enough; neither of them had looked forward to it or enjoyed that time. Even now Draco was a hindrance occasionally.

Why would he want more? That didn't make sense. "Dobby, a glass." She sat in the chair opposite her husband.

"He's gone."

"Draco?" Lucius seemed to calm for that, but what else could he mean?

"Dobby. Draco told me that Potter had an elf and that I should confiscate it; the plan wasn't that bad, but I forgot to check the facts. I have since had a long talk with Severus about Potter."

"Elsa, a glass." A house elf popped in and gave her a glass. Narcissa nodded and filled her glass. "So Dumbledore protected him? You should have expected that."

"Not Dumbledore." Lucius took a rather large sip; very unusual. He usually only did that if he'd been exposed to the Cruciatus.

"Potter's elf wasn't a house elf. It... She was as obedient, or at least appeared so, but looks far more human, with black skin. Her actions however were a lot more like your sister."

He took another sip. "At least in general terms. She's much more creative than Bellatrix. A tad less sadistic, but far more bloodthirsty."

Narcissa sipped as she considered that. "So Potter isn't the icon of the light everyone believes him to be."

Lucius actually laughed. "It was a lot like meeting the Dark Lord for the first time. I didn't know who he was back then. I couldn't help but notice the aura that surrounded him; it was warning everyone that he could and would crush anyone in his way. Potter is the same, maybe even worse. I didn't notice it until he actually turned it on me; he was amused by my attempt to punish him; he treated me like I was of no importance. I'm not sure even the Dark Lord could take him on alone."

"Are you sure you don't imagine things?" The Dark Lord was extraordinary powerful and skilled. For a child to be that powerful...

"His elf suggested they kill everyone I loved and then rip out my heart while they sent my soul to the abyss; and no, I don't believe she was lying or exaggerating. The intention wasn't there, I think, but I do not doubt they could have done it. Potter was actually tempted by her subtle idea to establish dominance in the family by kidnapping Sara and serving her to me at a feast they held in my honor. Honestly tempted."

Narcissa blinked. Twice. Then again. Then she emptied her glass. "Even the Dark Lord wouldn't do something like that!"

"Indeed. He then used something like the Imperius on me without even raising his wand, something far more powerful, and ordered me to give him Dobby; right in front of Dumbledore! And Draco seems to have decided that taunting Potter is his duty."

Narcissa sighed, "What did Severus say?"

"Potter has access to unknown magical potions, including some that will revolutionize medical potions, should Severus figure out how to brew them. He is fascinated by poisons and an expert at creating and

handling them. Severus has no doubt that Potter can and has killed in cold blood."

"Can we remove him from school?"

"Potter? Not unless we want to die."

"I meant Draco."

"Difficult and expensive; both in money and prestige. I don't think he could take over the family in the future if we did that. Besides... Potter seems to enjoy his little schemes for the moment."

Narcissa sighed, "I'm not sure he ever could. So... a new heir."

"It seems necessary. Potter won't press the issue, but Draco..."

"He won't leave him alone. The boy was never satisfied with a partial success. He always wanted everything. A new heir." She sighed again. "I really didn't want to go through that twice."

"I will get the potions from Severus."

"Does it matter? A girl groomed to be Potter's mistress might be a better way to continue the line, if he is that powerful. Assuming he is interested in girls."

"He is. Far more so than the Dark Lord ever was. Perhaps you are right and we should let magic decide."

IIIIIIII

Alerted by the wards, Harry's eyes snapped open and he remained motionless for a moment to examine the nature of the alarm. His hand reached out to confirm that his Drow was by his side, time to give her a bit of fun.

"Min," he called out.

"I am awake, master," the drow replied softly.

"Why don't you go greet our guest?" he suggested.

"Yes, master."

"Be gentle," he called after her. "I want them to be able to talk."

"Would you also like them to be willing, master?" Min asked hopefully as she slipped out from between the silk sheets and pulled on a pair of boots.

"So long as you don't get too enthusiastic," Harry agreed, eyes on his servant. He hated to see her go, but he loved to watch her leave.

With a groan, Harry left the warmth of his covers and pulled on his clothing, topping it off with a maille shirt. It never hurt to be careful.

He'd just finished buckling on his belt and bollock dagger when his big nosed porter stole into the room.

"Your guest is ready to receive you, sir," Noodnik announced.

"Wonderful," Harry replied. "Feel free to go back to your rack, I doubt I'll have any more need of you tonight."

"Yes, sir," the big nosed porter agreed.

"One more thing."

"Sir?"

"There is an envelope on my desk, please deliver it to Minerva in the castle tomorrow morning," Harry ordered.

"Yes, sir."

Harry walked down the tapestried halls and descended his marble staircase to the main entry hall. 'Time to put up some new artwork,' he mused. The paintings he had up were starting to get a bit stale.

Finally, he turned his attention to the reason he'd woken. He was less than pleased to see what his Drow had been up to.

"What did I say about damaging him?" Harry sighed.

"Not to damage him too much," the Drow replied. "And I didn't, master. I haven't even touched him." She did not like making that admission, hurt her pride, it did.

"If you didn't damage him, what caused the mess?" Harry demanded. A wave of his hand cleaned the intruder's soiled trousers and another wave removed the stench.

"He is aware of my people, master," Min answered, a bit annoyed at the man's instinctual terror, far more annoyed at the fact that she hadn't been the one to instill it.

"I see." Harry turned his stare on the man. "How do you know what she is?"

"Reputation, I've been told all about the black skinned elves," the man replied instantly. There was no way in hell that he was going to provoke a being, there was no way the thing before him was a mere boy, whom a Drow called master.

"You didn't have to do anything to make him willing to talk?" Harry asked.

"Nothing much, master," Min agreed. "I did amuse myself while waiting for you to arrive." Which hardly counted in her opinion, she'd been far gentler than her elder sisters had been the last time they'd cornered her for a bit of sport.

Harry noted the man's shudder. "Why are you here?" Harry waited three seconds. "Speak or I'll give you to her."

"I-I was s-sent to kill a boy named Harry P-Potter," the assassin quickly stuttered out.



"Give me one good reason why I should let you live." He had no intention of doing it, but it was always amusing to hear what they came up with and the possibility that they might let something valuable slip was one that could not be missed.

"Front breast pocket, I was told to leave the envelope on your corpse," the assassin replied quickly, his eyes locked on the dark figure by the boy's side.

Min leaned forward and planted her fist in the man's left kidney, then cut his pocket open, delivering the note to her master on the point of her dagger.

After a quick check for curses, Harry opened the envelope and read the letter.

"What is it, master?" Min asked, punching the man again.

"A note from cousin Lucius," Harry replied. "He says that assuming we take the assassin alive, that he's a gift for you." Harry reached down to take something off the floor and then tossed the Drow the tool roll that had been on the assassin's belt. "Along with these, he says that they're specially made for extracting teeth, eyes, and fingers. Guess you made quite an impression on him."

Harry locked eyes with the assassin, there was only one sentence given out in lands he controlled to assassins and thieves, that targeted him anyway. His eyes flicked from the man to his hopeful Drow. "Have fun."

"You said you wouldn't give me to her if I talked!" the assassin squealed. "You-oof!" Min punched the man in the stomach and shoved a dirty rag into his gaping mouth.

"Don't stay up too late, you might be having a rather busy day tomorrow if things work out," Harry said.

"Yes, Master." She reached down and dislocated the man's pinky finger, she just loved the way they felt when then popped in her hand, reminded her of childhood memories.

"Speaking of which, remind me to look through the potions books tomorrow," Harry commanded as he turned to leave.

"Yes, master," Min agreed.

"Another thing cousin Lucius mentioned in his note," Harry explained. "He says that there are a couple potions that can be used to temporarily gain a few years. Looks like you might go back to being my bed elf sooner than I thought you'd be."

"Please be sure to thank cousin Lucius for me, master," Min said happily, dislocating the man's other pinky. She grabbed a handful of the groaning man's hair and smashed his face into the stone floor a couple times to quiet him down a bit. The nerve of the bastard, making noise when she was trying to have a conversation with her master.

"Leave his head in recognizable condition," Harry order over his shoulder.

"Yes, master," the Drow agreed. She didn't like it, but she thought she understood her master's command. It was always best to have the message recognizable.

"Have a good night," Harry said as he walked up the stairs to his bedroom.

"Oh, I will, Master," Min agreed, using the point of her dagger to pry off one of the unfortunate man's kneecaps. Her victim screaming through his gag as she worked.

|||||||

Noodnik walked into the Great Hall, to the Head Table, and handed an envelope to the Gryffindor Head of House the next morning.

"Compliments of my employer," Noodnik reported. His left hand shot out and snagged a handful of bacon from one of the trays.

"Thank you." Minerva scanned the message. "Poppy."

"Yes, Minerva?"

"Have a look at this." She handed the school nurse the note.

"Thank you." A smile bloomed on the woman's face. "Interesting."

"How long before Mr. Weasley is back in class?" Minerva asked.

"Monday if this is accurate," Poppy replied.

"The boss spent a few hours double checking it yesterday," Noodnik commented, cheeks bulging with purloined pork products.

"Be sure to thank your master for me," Minerva said warmly.

"Employer, ma'am," the hench corrected firmly. "I'm not like the Drow."

"No offense meant," Minerva said quickly. "I'd just assumed-"

"I stay with the boss because he pays well and takes it very personally when people try to kill his employees." As the Mayor of Peachtree had learned shortly before his horrible death, word tended to get around about things like that. "The drow has more complex reasons but they all boil down to the fact that she can't conceive of . . . well, a lot of things." He laughed. "Consequence of growing up where she did I suppose. To her, the world is divided into the strong and the weak and the weak are the rightful slaves of the strong." He wondered how the women would take it if he told them that, by Drow standards anyway, Min was considered hopelessly soft and demure.

|||||

Lucius was completely unsurprised when a package arrived just as he'd sat down to eat. He opened the box and looked down at the head of the assassin he'd hired. The man's eyes had been plucked out, his ears torn off, his lips stitched together, his nose crushed into an almost unrecognizable pulp, all while he was still alive judging by

the frozen expression of pain and horror on what was left of what was left of the man's face.

"What's that, Lucius?" Narcissa asked.

"I sent Harry a message last night," Lucius spoke slowly. "This is his reply."

"What sort of message?" Narcissa asked with as much calm as she could muster. Her husband hadn't done something foolish, had he?

"I hired a third rate assassin and gave him a note," Lucius replied. "Harry sent back the man's head."

"I see." Narcissa unwound, sure that the boy knew the game well enough to take the gesture in the right way.

Lucius looked down and noticed that a scrap of paper protruding from one of the empty eye sockets. He carefully pulled it out and unrolled it.

"He's requesting another meeting," Lucius announced.

"What about?"

"It doesn't say," Lucius said. "Just that he'd like to have it as soon as is convenient for me."

"I suppose we could take that as a good sign," Narcissa said thoughtfully.

"I took the fact that we didn't wake up in his keep being tended by his elf as a good sign," Lucius replied with a rare grin. "Especially now that I've had a chance to see an example of her work. I'm going to take this as a great sign."

IIIIIIIIII

It wasn't hard to find Harry's Keep, not with Hogwarts' Potions Master as their guide. The large, well lit and apparently well protected path that led through the forest to the castle's gates helped too.

"Good luck, Lucius, Narcissa," Snape said as they stopped at the door.

"Thank you, Severus," Lucius replied. "You'll see to Draco if we do not return?"

"He'll be out of the country before nightfall," Snape promised. "I'll do everything I can to see to it that the Malfoy line will continue."

The Malfoys waited till their backup plan disappeared before they raised the knocker and waited for their host to appear.

"Yes?" The door was answered by a servant with a gigantic nose.

"We are here to meet with the master of the keep," Lucius replied, presenting his card.

"This way, sir."

They followed the man up two spiral flights of stairs, coming to a stop in front of a stout oak door.

"The Malfoy family to see you, sir," the big nosed servant announced.

"Send them in," was the muffled reply.

An older looking Harry stood up from his desk with a smile as they walked into his office.

"Cousin Lucius, I hadn't expected to see you so soon," Harry greeted the man. "And you must be Cousin Narcissa."

"I am," she agreed. "A bit closer than my husband through your paternal grandmother who was one of my paternal Aunts."

"Pleasure to meet you. Would either of you care for something to drink?" Harry wasn't surprised at the fact that he was related to both sides, he did apparently come from their society's noble class and

inbreeding was one of the traditional ways to keep wealth and power in the family.

"Yes, please," Lucius agreed.

"Please," Narcissa echoed.

"Min!"

The door opened and the elf arrived with a bottle of wine and three glasses, a insufferably smug look on her face. She passed out several glasses and filled them, making sure to give a larger amount to the blonde haired man in thanks for the information he'd sent regarding the aging potions.

Harry waited until the wine was poured before turning to Lucius. "Thank you for coming, I hadn't expected to see you so soon."

"You wished to speak with me," Lucius stated cautiously, injecting as much courtesy into his tone as possible without sounding servile. "How could I possibly be so rude as to make my dear cousin wait on me?"

"Yes, two things. The first is a small issue I thought I'd bring to your attention," Harry agreed. "I'm afraid that young Draco is having a bit of trouble with his studies."

"Oh?" Lucius' voice wavered a bit. "How so?"

"I don't think it's the boy's fault," Harry assured the man. "Rather the environment in the school, nothing to it but to get him an instructor of some sort. I'd offer Min, but . . ."

"I already have a pet, master," Min interjected. She'd never thought it would be so rewarding to have a lesser creature depend upon you. It explained why her second sister was so fond of toads, and to think, at the time she'd assumed that the older girl was just milking them for their venom.

"The Gryffindor girl?" he prompted, trying to get confirmation.

"Yes, master," she agreed.

"Ah. I was more worried that you'd geld young Draco," Harry admitted and then she'd have been honestly confused on why'd he objected. He returned his attention to Lucius. "I'm afraid that I can not offer any suggestions for a tutor while he's at Hogwarts. I do have a couple potential summer programs you might wish to look at later, but I also understand that you may wish to keep the boy at home."

"Yes," Lucius sighed. "Thank you for bringing this to my attention."

"What's family for if not to help each other?" Harry grinned. His eyes flicked to his servant. "Family that is not competing at the moment."

Min closed her mouth. "Yes, master."

"What was the other issue?" Lucius asked.

"Do you know what the definition of an honest politician is?" Harry asked with a grin.

"Please enlighten me," Lucius replied.

"One that stays bought," Harry answered. "I'm afraid one of yours isn't honest."

"Who? How do you know?" Lucius asked, a flicker of rage lighting his eyes.

Harry raised an eyebrow. "Really, cousin Lucius."

"You're right," Lucius agreed. "What would you like in trade?"

"Min, the letter." Harry smiled. "Nothing much, just a small favor."

"Might I have a bit of time with your servant, Cousin Harry?" Narcissa asked with a smile. "It will allow the two of you a bit of privacy while you talk business."

"Of course," Harry agreed. "Best behavior, Min."

"Of course, Master."

Harry waited until the women were gone before turning back to his cousin. "As I was saying . . ."

|||||||

Narcissa focused on her breathing, keeping it calm and measured as she followed the other woman out of the room.

"What did you wish to speak with me about?" Min asked, staring at the much younger woman.

"Lucius and I have spoken about providing a consort for Harry," Narcissa said carefully. "Is this something you would object to?"

"Why would I?" Min frowned in confusion, perhaps it was a human thing?

"Some women do, though I confess that I don't understand it myself."

"When would you give us this consort?" Min asked intently.

"Sixteen or so years from now. I still need to arrange to get pregnant and I'm sure you have an idea of what sort of chore that can be."

"Not just a consort. You're hoping to deepen your house's ties to Master!" Min exclaimed, understanding at last.

"Correct," Narcissa agreed.

"Make your preparations. I shall speak with Master about it and inform you if he is displeased by the notion."

"Thank you." Narcissa reached into her pocket and pulled out a vial filled with a yellowish liquid. "A gift for you."

"What is it?"



"Forty liters of basilisk venom, a drop is enough to kill a hundred men." It was a good thing the beasts grew so large, or it would have taken decades to gather even half as much. "I had the command word to enlarge the vial engraved on to the cap."

Min took the vial with a smile. "How do you administer it?"

"Contact causes horrific burns and will eventually prove fatal after it burns through the skin and into the blood stream. Ingestion causes a similar reaction from the inside. Most people coat a weapon and administer it that way." Narcissa reached up and pulled out a hat pin. "This is my preferred method of delivery, though that is not my preferred poison. That one has no known cure."

"So?"

"So I'm not careful enough to be confident of my skill with a poison that I'm not immune to," Narcissa laughed. "Afraid that I'm just a dabbler."

"With Master's permission, why don't we agree to meet at some future date to compare notes?" Min suggested. "While I am a bit more than a dabbler, I lack local knowledge."

"With your master's permission, I agree," Narcissa stated, pleased almost beyond reason at how well the meeting was going.

"And as a favor between one enthusiast to another, your agent's plan to get your son out of the country would not have worked," Min confided. "That's assuming Master wouldn't have snapped him up before the meeting."

"Thank you," Narcissa said, mustering every ounce of control to avoid changing her expression. "Care to offer a bit of friendly advice?"

"What do you have in trade?"

IIIIIIII

Lucius' eyes were burning with rage as he poured over the evidence of treachery. It seemed that their esteemed Minister was a very naughty boy.

"I have some photos if you'd like to change from bribery to blackmail," Harry offered. "Not sure I would myself, but I thought I'd make the offer."

"I'll ruin the bastard before I kill him," Lucius growled.

"So you can use the photos," Harry said cheerfully. "Wonderful. Would have been a shame to let them go to waste."

"What do you want for them?" Lucius asked, forcing himself to lower his voice.

"Oh, nothing much," Harry said, taking a sip of his drink.

|||||||

Fred and George were waiting outside the Hospital wing for their youngest brother on the day of his release.

"Come to gloat about your prank?" Ron asked sullenly, glaring at his two brothers from the moment he stepped out of the Hospital Wing and into the hall.

"Wasn't us, dear brother," George replied.

"What it was, is an important lesson for you," Fred agreed. "Do you know what that lesson is?"

"Or are you too thick?"

"Sod off!" Ron barked. He turned to walk away only to freeze at the feeling of two hands resting on each shoulder and the points of two wands digging into the back of his neck.

"Lesson one-"

"-don't insult people that can and will retaliate."

The world spun and Ron felt an itch all over his body. To the boy's surprise, he appeared to be on the castle's flagstone floor.

"Lesson two-"

"-some people aren't as nice as we are, this will wear off in a few minutes."

"You annoyed someone that's much less nice than we are and McGonagall had to do a lot of trading to cure you."

"Imagine she'd be quite put out if you were dumb enough to provoke them again."

"Imagine they might be more than a bit put out if you did too, perhaps enough to subtract one brother from the Weasley family."

"Which is why we had a talk."

Ron felt another hex begin to take effect, it felt like his stomach had done a backflip and his mouth tasted like . . . oh god, they didn't!

"We don't think we'd like to face mum if we let that happen to you, so we're going to be keeping a very close eye on you."

Ron's stomach rolled, he was going to throw up, oh please Merlin let him keep it down!

"Even Percy agrees, though he's going to take a different track. We're going to be watching you, if you pick on any student and we see it-"

"-this will seem like a pleasant memory."

"If Percy sees it, you'll have detention every day for the rest of the year, you'll lose so many points that Gryffindor won't be able to even think about having the cup again for a hundred years, and worse-"

"-he'll tell mum."

His stomach emptied, spraying acid out a very tender orifice and into his robes. The boy belched and gagged at the smell emanating from his mouth.

"We'll just leave you here to think about what you did, shall we?"

"I believe we shall," the other twin agreed. "I'm glad the three of us were able to have this talk, Ron."

"See to it that we never have to repeat it," the first twin finished ominously.

Ron crawled back into the Hospital Wing to the sounds of his brother's repeating footsteps. Some days, it just didn't pay to be him.

AN: Been meaning to throw this out into the world for a while, figured that I may as well do it today. In this story, Min goes from the elven equivalent of about 18 to maybe 14 or 15. If I continue it at some point, I'm going to have to remember to let slip that she was enslaved and given to Harry by one of her brothers, the nicest one.

Polish by: dogbertcarroll

Scenes by: dogbertcarroll, Drake

Ideas by: dogbertcarroll, polychromeknight

Typos by: dogbertcarroll, polychromeknight, Dave Gerecke, laros\_deejay, Jim Trigg, Tommy King, Stick97, Mark, Ciaran, lucindas43302, alexcorvin1980, Cheral Rallock, Lucinda Siverling

(In short, a lot of help from dogbertcarroll, polychromeknight, and everyone else on my yahoo group)

Omake Time Line/Harry's Resume:

Six months to a year as a pickpocket/second story man - Thief

Twelve years at the guild learning to be a mage – apprentice Mage, thief

Two years at war – Squad/Platoon level magic support, Scout, Fighter

Several as a member of an adventurer's group – magical support

Mercenary – living artillery piece, Fighter

Mercenary captain – tactician, logistician

Hogwarts – Firsty

Omake: Complaints

"There have been some complaints from the Prefects regarding your general disdain for the house system," Dumbledore began slowly.

"I agreed to several conditions before accepting a place at your school," Harry replied coldly. "But I refuse to consider myself bound by unreasonable rules and regulations."

"Just what rules do you find reasonable?" Dumbledore asked faintly. The look on the old man's face suggested that he was in dire need of a large dose of fiber.

"None of them," Harry replied instantly. "Why do you ask?" Harry held up a hand to hold off the protest on the old man's lips. "I understand the importance of rules, I understand the importance of following the rules, what I do not understand is why I should pay any attention to the castle's rules."

"You're a student, as such you are expected to know and follow the regulations," Dumbledore tried.

"So you're saying that I should step aside to allow passage of one from a superior family when we meet in the hall?" Harry asked with a grin. "Or perhaps you'd like me to spend every Sunday on my knees in contemplation as the rules state I must."

"Harry, those rules haven't been enforced in . . ."

"Quite some time I imagine," Harry interjected. "None the less, they are still on the books."

"Still . . ."

"I refuse to read through a rule book that is ninety percent dreck in order to find the few bits that are still relevant, what's more, if you refuse to enforce the majority of the rules you have then I see no reason to follow the ones you do enforce. To put it another way, either all rules are to be respected or none of them are. I advise you to either revise the rules or throw the entire thing out and start anew, it matters not to me. Unless and until that happens, I will continue on as I have been. I trust that I have made myself understood, Headmaster?" Harry asked with a raised eyebrow.

"You have," Dumbledore sighed. "I'll let the Prefects know to ignore you."

"Can you afford that lapse of discipline?"

"Hmmm?"

"The appearance of favoring me," Harry clarified.

"Happily, this is one situation where your fame as the boy who lived works in our favor. If they press the matter, I'll hand them the rule book with instructions to study it to find the same work around you did," Dumbledore laughed.

"Mind if I make a suggestion?"

"Not at all," Dumbledore prompted.

"Follow that up with a promise that you're looking at revising the rules so no such exception exists in the future and spend a few months cutting the fat. Produce a book that makes sense and you'll find that I'll become much more law abiding."

"Any changes must be approved by the governors," Dumbledore cautioned.

"I don't see that being a problem," Harry replied confidently. "Produce a book of regulations that can be followed and I'll see about getting it adopted."

AN: Polish by: dogbertcarroll

Omake: The Hands, They BURN

"Hmmm, haven't seen a possession for quite a while." Harry scratched his chin. "Shame you're not a priestess any longer, Min."

"The goddess dislikes it when one of her slaves gets a new master, master," Min replied. "But even if I were still serving, my skills would not have aided us in this matter."

"Suppose not," Harry agreed. "What do you say I try fire first?"

"Fire is always fun to use, master."

"True." He looked at the paralyzed man. "This is nothing personal, you understand, they're paying me quite a bit to stop you. Burning hands."

Deleted Scene by Me

Lucius awoke with a start, something was wrong. The ex-Death Eater reached under his pillow for a spare wand and was mildly put out to find it missing.

"We also took the one you keep in your bed side table, your wife's bodice dagger, and several other things," a young boy's voice stated blandly. "And no, we didn't come here to kill you."

"Though that option remains on the table," a feminine voice added.

"Potter," Lucius growled.

"I came to point a few things out to you," Harry said with a grin. "One, you're not safe. Your wards slowed me down for less than a minute. Two, while admirable and understandable, you're going to have to stop fighting young Draco's battles for him. He needs to learn how to fight his own if he's ever going to take his place at the head of the Malfoy family."

"What will you do if I continue?"

"Depends on the situation," Harry replied. "I'm not saying you can't protect the boy. But if you keep stepping in to resolve school yard conflicts, then we'll have to throw young Draco into the deep end. Losing his parents could make or break the boy. Either would be better than watching you ruin him."

"Agreed," Lucius sighed. "Anything else?"

"You tried to take my elf," Harry laughed. "I don't think you have any idea what a bad idea that was. Still, it's the thought that counts. You tried to take mine, it's only fair that I take yours."

"Dobby," Lucius barked.

"You is calling Dobby, Master Lucius?" the pathetic creature simpered.

"What's that?" Harry demanded.

"My elf," Lucius replied.

"What are they good for?" The thing looked like some horrific cross between a Kobold and a Gnome with perhaps a bit of goblin dashed in for flavor.

"Cooking, cleaning, that sort of thing," Lucius replied with a yawn. "Dobby, meet your new master. Was there anything else or can I get back to sleep?"



"That was it," Harry replied. "Oh, before I forget."

"Yes?"

"Contact me later, I've got a business opportunity and I need a local to tell me which politicians I need to bribe."

"Next Thursday work for you?"

"It should, I'll need to check with my elf to be sure."

"Have her contact my assistant," Lucius said as he closed his eyes. The boy could show himself out.

AN: Polish by: dogbertcarroll

Omake by Luinlothana

"Hey, Min, do you want to see how I perfected that spell for skinning a person alive? Now it can also work on separate body parts and the enhanced pain does not lead to passing out."

"Really? I'd love to see that." The Drow smiled to herself. Powerful magic and cruelty. Harry really knew how to romance a girl.

AN: Polish by: dogbertcarroll

Omake by Swordchucks

"You said you wouldn't give me to her if I talked!" the assassin squealed.

"Oh, I'm sorry. You're right," Harry said, his eyes never leaving Min's. "I guess we'll just have to let you go."

In spite of himself, the assassin sputtered, "Really?"

"No, not really," Harry said drolly, very much amused. "Min, he's all yours."

AN: Polish by: dogbertcarroll

Omake by moshehim

"What kind of potion would you use to cure a broken arm?" Snape asked.

"Mid-level healing potion after setting the bone," Harry replied automatically. "Assuming you don't have a healer of some sort with you already."

"Stupid boy!" Snape said. "there is no such thing as a 'Mid-level healing potion'!"

"Of course there is!" Harry exclaimed. "Here, see?" he asked fishing a bottle from his, or rather Min's, bag.

"What is this mockery?" asked Snape eyeing the unfamiliar potion. "Don't fool around in my classroom, Potter, or you'll be out of it before you can say- Oooowwww!"

Harry had enough, and decided practical demonstration was in order. In one swift motion he was on his feet, near his professor, and broke his arm. After which he pinched the man's nose and made him swallow the neon-bright blue potion in his hand. Lo and behold, the arm, which moments earlier had bone sticking out of it, was mended and healed, as good as new.

Snape spluttered.

Omake by patrick\_nakasone

With a groan Min started waking up. She did a quick mental body check Discovering that other then a headache and the pains of the assorted bruises one gets on the losing side of a fight nothing else hurt. Which meant she had not been raped while she was out cold.

Of course all that could simply mean was her captor wanted her fully awake and aware while it happened. As well as the fact she was

wearing something other than her armor or usual cloths. The last thing she remembered was being introduced to a wall by a human male who had made just her feel like it was her first day at sword training again. She sat up quickly opening her eyes . Just as quickly deciding that was a rash action as the person who just started using her skull as a drum had also glued sand to her insides of her eyelids.

Looking at down herself she confirmed that she had been striped of her armor and weapons and was wearing a basic human brown peasant style dress. The fact she was not chained or restrained in any way was surprising. Looking around her surroundings she noticed several things. First she was in large tent well maintained and organized. Second was the person kept only what they need on hand, it could be all packed quickly by one person, and was of the highest quality but not luxurious manufacture. From the discipline of the drill chant of the sergeant outside the tent she judged was in some sort of military camp. The human who had defeated her entered the tent. He was wearing sturdy well made cloths of neutral military colors. He grabbed a folding camp chair from the desk and sat down looking at her.

"So my prize is awake at last. My name is Harry Potter. I want you to tell me your name and clan so I can send a ransom letter to your family. One must observe the forms of course. So you will tell me or things will get unpleasant. Just so you know that as long as that you are either in my company or in this tent you are safe from the predations of the rest of the men in camp. Outside of that... well you do not need to guess what could happen to you," Harry smoothly intoned as if talking about the weather.

End scene

AN: Polish by: dogbertcarroll

Omake by Luinlothana

"What's your name?"

"Why should I tell you, rivvil?" [human]

"Aren't you forgetting yourself, a bit? maybe you should be reminded of your current situation."

She smirked. "Very well. Why should I tell you, \*jabbuk\*? [master]

"Well, for one, it would be easier to have something other than servant to address you."

"And aside from that, it could be used in a number of rituals to torture me?"

"Smart girl. But I could do that quite successfully without knowing it as well. So? What is your name?"

"Mrimm d'dossta elghinn [guide to your death]," she fired quickly with a smirk on her lips.

"Cute. So how about we shorten that to Min? It suits you. So nice and girly."

"What?"

"I knew you'd like it. Now be a dear and prepare the fireplace. And Min? Any time you want to change your mind and tell me your real name you are welcome to do it." He walked away, erecting the Globe of Invulnerability a moment before the dart from her sithyrr reached him.

Omake by nielingage

Later:

Slicewing grabbed a fresh mug. The ground around him was littered with the broken pieces of five previous mugs (and eight smaller shot cups) that he'd dropped. Not because he was hammered; far from it! He'd only managed to drink down about half a mug's worth. After the first wasted mug (he hadn't even got a drop of that one) he'd taken to only putting a little in each cup. That way he was at least getting

some alcohol into his system before the fear weakened his grip bad enough that he couldn't hold the mug.

The shot cups had been worthless in that respect; he hadn't gotten a single one to his lips before they slipped through his trembling fingers.

The door banged open and several goblins trooped in, only to stop at seeing their co-worker's state. The lead goblin, a particularly snaggle-toothed runt named Griphook, smiled viciously while checking the level of alcohol left in the barrel Slicewing was dipping from.

"Such a sad state when a gob can't hold his liquor," Griphook jeered. "Half a mug and you can barely sit up straight-urk!"

Slicewing had shot out of his seat and wrapped his hands around Griphook's neck. "Hold my liquor?" he snarled. "I can hold it fine, but today I'm having trouble holding the mug, because I had one of the Great Ones of the Under in my line today."

All mirth bled out of the otherwise amused goblins who'd followed Griphook in, and had quite enjoyed Slicewing's reprisal. Griphook, though still struggling against the grip on his neck, paled. "A Great One?" he whispered hoarsely. "Here?"

Slicewing bared every tooth. "A Great One," he confirmed. "A Great One, moreover, submitting to a Master. A \*male\* Master."

Griphook went absolutely still. The watching goblins shrank away from the two. He didn't want to, but the word slipped out. "Who?"

"\*Harry Potter\*."

AN: Polish by: dogbertcarroll

More by slickrcbd

At this Griphook promptly soiled his underwear while going deathly pale. He fervently hopes that he can cover the evidence that he'd been skimming from the Potter vaults for the last four years. Ever

since Dumbledore had bribed him for access to them 'in order to finance Harry's upbringing'. If one of THEM calls Harry master... Well, he shudders to think what would happen if he were found out.

AN: Polish by: dogbertcarroll

Still more by Drake

Slicewing sighed, "And that's not the worst; she insisted on getting all keys her master owns. You know what \*THAT\* means!"

"This could be trouble," one of the goblins muttered.

"Could?" Slicewing dropped Griphook to the floor. "Could? Under their law carrying the mark of another is a sign of enslavement. If you defeat the slave owner, you get all her slaves. Which includes anything they may own."

"Gringotts can better afford a war with the wizards than with the Great Ones," the youngest goblin said. "Not that it would come to that. We simply inform the Daily Propaganda that Harry Potter claimed his due and that all slaves should present themselves to him as soon as possibly. Wizards do still have right of conquest in some form, and it does play a great part in their myths, so they shouldn't be too offended by that. Well, most will be more amused than anything, but the ministry should not be too keen to get involved. Especially if we announce that all the money is already under Potter's control."

"And it would allow us to take some measure of Harry Potter," Slicewing muttered. "That actually does sound like a good plan."

"The Malfoys arrived just a while ago," Griphook said with a nasty smirk. "I would love to see a Great One teaching them proper behavior."

All four goblins laughed at that, though Slicewing was pretty hysteric. He took a few deep breaths to calm himself, "Right. Griphook, see that the guards know about the Great One's claim on the Malfoys and the other marked slaves. I will be in the archives trying to find out

exactly what Potter owns. Or has any claim on under Their law. Somehow I feel that what we know is just the seepage before the flooding."

AN: Goblins live underground, so 'tip of the iceberg' doesn't fit. However flooding would be an ever present danger (unless you spell every square inch over and over again).

AN: Polish by: dogbertcarroll

A Malfoy Omake by Drake

Narcissa entered the sitting room and was surprised that Lucius was sitting there nursing a firewhiskey. The bottle was still about three quarter full, but their open bottle had at best been half full yesterday. While both of them enjoyed a glass or two in the evening, it was very unusual for Lucius to drink more. In fact he hadn't since the Dark Lord lost. Lucius looked at her.

"Can you bear another heir?"

She looked at him wide eyed. They had agreed before their marriage that one child was enough; neither of them had looked forward to it or enjoyed that time. Even now Draco was a hindrance occasionally. Why would he want more? That didn't make sense.

"Dobby, a glass." She sat in the chair opposite to her husband.

"He's gone."

"Draco?" Lucius seemed to calm for that, but what else could he mean.

"Dobby. Draco told me that Potter had an elf and that I should confiscate it; the plan wasn't that bad, but I forgot to check the facts. I have since had a long talk with Severus about Potter."

"Elsa, a glass." A house elf popped in and gave her a glass. Narcissa nodded and filled her glass. "So Dumbledore protected him? You should have expected that."

"Not Dumbledore." Lucius took a rather large sip; very unusual. He usually only did that if he'd been exposed to the Cruciatus. "Potter's elf wasn't a house elf. It. She was as obedient, or at least appeared so, but looks far more human, with black skin. Her actions however were a lot more like your sister." He took another sip. "At least in general terms. She's much more creative than Bellatrix. A tad less sadistic, but far more bloodthirsty."

Narcissa sipped as she considered that. "So Potter isn't the icon of the light everyone believes him to be."

Lucius actually laughed. "It was a lot like meeting the Dark Lord for the first time. I didn't know who he was back then. I couldn't help but notice the aura that surrounded him; it was warning everyone that he could and would crush anyone in his way. Potter is the same, maybe even worse. I didn't notice it until he actually turned it on me; he was amused by my attempt to punish him; he treated me like I was of no importance. I'm not sure even the Dark Lord could take him on alone."

"Are you sure you don't imagine things?" The Dark Lord was extraordinary powerful and skilled. For a child to be that powerful.

"His elf suggested to kill everyone I loved and then rip out my heart while they sent my soul to the abyss; and no, I believe her. The intention wasn't there, I think, but I do not doubt they could have done it. Potter was actually tempted by her subtle idea to establish dominance in the family; kidnapping Sara and serving her to me at a feast they held in my honor. Honestly tempted."



Narcissa blinked. Twice. Then again. Then she emptied her glass.  
"Even the Dark Lord wouldn't do something like that!"

"Indeed. He then used something like the Imperius on me, just far more powerful, and ordered me to give him Dobby; right in front of Dumbledore! And Draco seems to have decided that taunting Potter is his duty."

Narcissa sighted, "What did Severus say?"

"Potter has access to unknown magical potions, including some that will revolutionize medical potions, should Severus figure out how to brew them. He is fascinated by poisons and an expert at creating and handling them. Severus has no doubt that Potter can and has killed in cold blood."

"Can we remove him from school?"

"Potter? Not unless we want to die."

"I meant Draco."

"Difficult and expensive; both in money and prestige. I don't think he could take over the family in the future if we did that."

Narcissa sighted, "I'm not sure he even could. So a new heir."

"It seems necessary. Potter won't press the issue, but Draco."

"He won't leave him alone. The boy was never satisfied with a partial success. He always wanted everything. A new heir." She sighed. "I really didn't want to go through that twice."

"I will get the potions from Severus."

"Does it matter? A girl groomed to be Potter's mistress might be a better way to continue the line, if he is that powerful. Assuming he is interested in girls."

"He is. Far more so than the Dark Lord ever was. Perhaps you are right and we should let magic decide."

AN: Polish by: dogbertcarroll

Omake by patrick\_nakasone

"Min come here. I have word from your family," Harry called out pleasantly in the tent.

Min entered wearing a basic brown peasant dress from a partitioned off section of the tent. She notices Harry is sitting in a chair in front of him are two pillows one has her rapier on it the next has a small vial on it. There was a third pillow with a leather slave collar on his right side next to his feet." What did they say human?" she asked.

"They have refused any negotiations for a ransom and said I can do with you as I please. So what should I do with you? " Harry said with a smirk.

"So what have you decided human ?" she asked with a sneer as she sat down on the ground without asking permission. Min was not surprised that her family left her hanging out to dry.

"I have decide to let you have a choice in your fate. First option is you can try to kill me with your sword and escape. Given the results of our last fight I am sure that you will end up on your back knocked out again and I will sell you at the next slave auction after having some fun with you of course. If you manage to kill me the camp guards will allow you to get ten meters from this tent before they give chase. You will most likely be caught quickly will not die as quickly as you would wish. Second option is to just try run for it I will not go chasing after you but the guards will give you the same ten meters before they give chase with more or less the same end results as the first as I will no longer protect you. Third option is to take the poison in that vial. Fourth option is for you to put on this collar submit and make yourself use full to me. So what is your choice?" Harry asked with a tone that only someone in total control of the situation could have as he gestured to the items in question.

It took all of Mins self control for her jaw not to drop from the sheer audacity, cunning, and ruthlessness of this human to set up this situation. No matter what choice she made he would benefit in some way from her choice. The first two options would either end with her being raped to death here in camp or raped and sold to a brothel or worse to live out her life and for a Drow that could be a long time. As her death by the third option would mean little to him it would only prevent her from getting revenge at some point in the future. Option four would only require her to swallow her pride and service his desires until a chance to exact her revenge came along.

She stood up with her head held high she reach behind her back for the ties of her dress and disrobed letting it fall to her feet. She then walk over to the pillow with the slave collar on it and picked it up. As she fastened it around her neck she knelt down on the pillow. She look down and asked, "How can I serve you, my master?"

"First You can put your dress back on. As I do not need you walking around my quarters nude to flatter my vanity of have such power over you. Second prepare some refreshments as I will have some guests soon discussing some new business arraignments. We will discuss other activities of your service to me later," Harry answered smoothly

As she stood up she glimpsed in to his eyes and saw that he knew which choice she would make before she even respond to his summons to come and talk about her family's response. She would have to learn quickly what level of subservience behavior he would demand from her. She also need to know what level of her scheming to kill him he would tolerate before he got rid of her as too much trouble. Yes she would have to plan both her service and revenge very carefully to this human as he may be a worthy master.

End scene

AN: Polish by: dogbertcarroll

Disclaimer: Just a bit of harmless fun?

Genre Savvy

It was the first day of the new term and the third year Ravensclaws were just settling down for their first lesson with the new Defense against the Dark Arts professor. Ignoring the the hisses of her classmates as Luna stood up and walked to the front of the room.

"Sit down you silly cow, before he takes points off," one of her roommates whispered as she walked past.

"Who are you?" Luna demanded, confronting the new defense teacher.

"Mad Eye Moody!" the man barked. "Now get back to yer seat before I start taking points."

The girl's wand seemed to apperate into her hand as she hit the fake with a barrage of spells.

"I'm going to ask again nicely, who are you?" Luna's serene expression never changed. "If you don't answer this time, I'm afraid I'm going to have to do something very impolite to you."

"What are you doing, Lovegood?" one of her classmates screamed.

A flick of her wand had the questioner bound and gagged. "Did anyone else have any questions?" She looked around, no one did. "Then you may wish to leave. Things are going to get a bit messy here and blood is so hard to clean out of robes unless you remember to charm them first." Her eyes lit up. "Which reminds me," she carefully charmed the instructors robes. "Now then, why don't you start by telling me who you really are?"

With the exception of the unfortunate that had attracted Luna's attention, the rest of the students fled the room.

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Filius Flitwick was in the middle of a rather exciting lesson on the many uses of the repulser charm when the door burst open and several of his third years tumbled in.

"Lovegood's finally cracked!" one of them squeaked.

"She attacked the new Defense Professor," another added.

"Take charge of the room, Ms. Chang," he ordered. "I shan't be long."

"Yes, Professor," the girl agreed.

Filius was unsurprised when Minerva joined him half way to the Defense room. Without a word, both Professors paused by the door.

"Been a while since we've done this," Minerva whispered with a smile.

"You never forget how to take a door," Filius replied. "Same as we used to do in the old days?"

"Bit late to learn new tricks," Minerva teased.

"Hush you," the Rat Terrier animagus replied with a grin, remembering some of their more memorable battles and how the term fighting like cats and dogs came to mean so much more in the magical world than it ever did in the muggle one.

With a deep breath, the old woman transfigured two inches of solid oak into a mass of hydrogen, allowing her colleague to provide the spark and concave shield.

Following the flash and bang, the two Professors burst into the room and nearly dropped their wands at the scene, there were two Moodys. The first was hanging upside down and wrapped in so much rope that he looked like a mummy, the second was sitting at the desk with their wayward student in his lap.

"Would you like to explain what's going on here, Alastor?" Minerva growled.

"Seems we had an impostor," the retired Auror said with a leer. "Lucky thing my lovely li'l granddaughter here knew the proper way to respond."

"I am a spinning whirlwind of death," the young girl giggled.

"Er did ye ferget who her mam was?"

"I tried," Minerva sighed. "Oh did I try." And it looked like it would be a long school year before she could oblivate herself of that knowledge once more.

"Does mummy still have the record for points taken away for public shagging?" Luna asked curiously. "I'm surprised it's lasted this long, 955,942 isn't that many for a month."

"That was for an entire term," Filius pointed out.

"Really?" she asked innocently. Causing her head of house no small amount of nervousness, no way they were getting the cup that year.

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In History class, Harry awoke with a start, his eyes shot open and darted around the room in search of threats.

"What's wrong?" Hermione asked in concern.

"I don't know," Harry whispered back. "I just felt an overwhelming urge to flee the castle to escape from some unexplainable horror."

"I'll check the library later," Hermione sighed. "Maybe we'll be able to find out what's trying to kill you early this year."

"Be nice to get it over with now so I don't have to spend the last week in the hospital wing," Harry mused.

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Moody leered up at the impostor as the polyjuice wore off to reveal a dead man or rather a soon to be dead man.

"Look what we've got here," he laughed. "What do you think, Mini?"

"I think you should wait till Amelia gets here," the Head of Gryffindor replied.

"Jest gonna ask a few questions to pass the time," Moody laughed. "Now then, you got a choice. Either you talk to me, or I'll leave the room and you can talk to my innocent little granddaughter."

Barty laughed in defiance, "What do . . ." The little girl looked up and he was trapped by her gaze.

He was a Death Eater, he'd thought he was tough, he'd thought he was the baddest thing in the world, he'd thought he's seen the worst humanity had to offer. What he saw when he looked into her two little eyes scared the piss out of him.

"I'll talk!" he squealed. The one part of his mind that wasn't gibbering in terror was idly hoping that his clothes would soak up the urine before it trickled down to his face. "Just get her away from me!"

|||||

Susan's eyes lit up when she heard the rumors racing through the castle about Ravenclaw's oddest student.

"Did you hear that, Hannah?"

"I heard it, Susan," her best friend agreed.

"She's perfect!" the two girls cheered.

|||||



Luna licked her lips as Gryffindor's boy hero crossed her gaze. It was long past time she did something to get closer to her mother's heritage.

'Harry is looking particularly yummy today,' she thought to herself as she stalked after him. 'Mmmmm, Potter.'

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Hermione looked over in concern as a shudder racked her best friend's body and privately vowed to redouble her efforts.

"What's wrong?" Ron asked.

"I'm getting the same feeling I used to get when Dudley was trying to sneak up on me for a round of 'Harry Hunting' only a hundred times worse," Harry replied.

"Better do some research on offensive spells too, Hermione," Ron suggested.

"Yeah," she agreed. "We'll start with violently lethal and work our way down to sadistically lethal."

"Thanks," Harry sighed. "Hope whatever it is, is willing to wait till we get prepared."

The trio took their customary seats at the Gryffindor table, the ones that allowed them to keep watch the doors, cover each others backs, and had three easy escape routes.

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A great sigh racked the new Defense Professor's frame as he looked down at the assembled students, it was going to be one of those years.

"Whatever is wrong, Alastor?" Minerva asked in concern.

"Ye remember what Larry Lovegood was like before m'daughter got her hooks into him right?" Moody sighed.

"Yes," Minerva agreed. "Why?"

"I think m'granddaughter discovered her hormones," Moody said morosely. "Judging by the looks she's been shooting yon Potter."

|||||||

Susan and Hannah bounced over to the Ravenclaw table and spent a few moments observing their target and the wide space around her. It seemed that no student was willing to sit within three places of her and the entire table was covered by an aura of fear and nervousness.

"Can we speak with you a minute, Luna?" Susan licked her lips, here it was, the thing she'd been looking for since she'd come to Hogwarts.

"Hmmm?" Luna looked up from her upside down newspaper. "Alright, what do you need?"

"Have you given much thought to your future?" Hannah asked, placing a sisterly hand on Luna's shoulder. "Specifically, what career you'd like to have."

"How about one in Law Enforcement?" Susan suggested. "Thanks to the wonderful concept of nepotism, I'm going to start my career as the commander of an Auror section and I'd like you to consider joining it."

"Every section needs a number of different people to work," Hannah added. "I'm going to get all the easy jobs since I'm Susan's best friend, for example."

"What do you want from me?" Luna cocked her head.

"We'd like you to consider being our loose cannon that doesn't play by the rules but gets results," Susan explained hopefully. "Please."

"Pretty please," Hannah agreed.

"With gravy on top?" Luna asked.

"Or whatever else you want."

"I want Harry Potter as my partner," Luna bargained.

"You'll probably need to bring in his Granger and Weasley too," Susan said thoughtfully. "Hermione does his thinking and Ron's a good source of comic relief."

"We were looking for someone to put into the intelligence department and someone else to run prosecutions," Hannah pointed out.

"Ron will be perfect for intelligence," Susan agreed, hopefully with hilarious results. "What do you say, Luna?"

"I say that I'm a loose cannon that doesn't play by the rules," Luna chirped.

"Yay!" the two Hufflepuffs cheered.

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Back at the Head Table, the Professors were still engaged in their favorite subject; gossiping about the students and placing wagers about the future.

"What was her father like?" Professor Vector asked.

"He was a bit of a pompous ass till her mother decided to see if there was any truth in advertising." Moody scratched his chin. "Shudda seen it commin in hindsight, what with 'er mam bein a succubus an all." Moody grinned. "I'm sure Potter'll be fine, got more mojo then my son in law ever did."

"Think Percy Weasley but worse," Minerva advised. "Selene stunned him, threw him onto her shoulder, and disappeared for three days. When he reappeared, he was as you see him today. Bughouse nuts and more than slightly dehydrated."

Every eye in at the Head Table turned to regard the object of Luna's desire.

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Meanwhile at the Gryffindor table, while their instructors were deeply immersed in their gossip, Ron rudely leaned across Hermione to grab another handful of chicken legs.

"They're looking at Harry again," Ron whispered.

"I see it," Hermione whispered back. Raising her voice to scold. "Ron don't be rude."

"Who's blocking my access to the chicken?" Ron belched.

In embarrassment, Harry put a hand over his face. "What do they think they want?" By chance, this made it quite difficult to read his lips.

"I found three dark creatures that can inspire feelings of dread," Hermione said through clenched teeth, her face set into a glare directed at Ron.

"Defenses?" Ron asked, masking his lips with a piece of chicken. "They've stopped looking at us."

"None of the ones I found should be able to survive in this climate," Hermione sighed. "I'm going to need to do more research."

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After a long look at the objects of their current conversation, the Staff turned back to their meals and continued their conversation.

"Shame about the insanity," Minerva sighed. "I was always quite fond of Mr. Potter."

"Way I figure it, my girl's only a quarter succubus so Potter has a better than average chance of lasting through their first night with his

sanity intact," Moody said cheerfully. "She's also a lot more patient than her mother was."

"You think she'll be willing to wait till the wedding night?" Minerva asked hopefully.

"Nah, I'm just hoping she's not going to decide the staff table during meal times is a wonderful place to shag till after I'm gone." Moody checked his watch. "Only seven more months, well that hopes down the crapper."

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Luna was forced to break off her observations after a couple hours when Harry and his friends retreated to the relative safety of the Gryffindor Common Room. With a pout, she retreated to her own common room to reread the latest issue of the Quibbler. It wasn't long before her reading was disturbed.

"Lovegood?" the spokesgirl for Luna's roommates called out nervously.

"Hmmm?" Luna looked up to regard the other girls.

"It's about the way we've been bothering you," the girl began nervously, the episode in the defense classroom was dramatic enough to convince them that bothering the little blond was a very VERY bad idea.

"Bothering?" The little blonde blinked in confusion.

"Bullying," the girl admitted.

"You've been bullying me?" Luna exclaimed in shock. "Well, we'll see about that!"

Her grandfather had spent a painstaking week before she'd come to Hogwarts explaining exactly what she should do to anyone stupid enough to harass Selene Lovegood's little girl.

The other Ravenclaws watched in horror as Luna showed them exactly what she thought of bullies, it was something none of them would ever forget no matter how they tried or how much their parents spent on therapy.

"Marietta?"

"Yeah, Cho?"

"Let's agree never to fuck with Lovegood ever again!"

"I'm with you, Cho," Marietta agreed, pale as a marshmallow at what she was seeing.

"Ten points to Ravenclaw for showing what we think of bullies," Cho called out nervously. "Um . . . I think they've had enough."

"You think so?" Luna's gaze froze the older girl.

"Unless you think they haven't," Cho added quickly.

IIIIIIIIII

Hermione leapt to her feet and darted over to where her two friends were engaged in a game of chess.

"I've got it," she announced proudly. "I know what's trying to kill you this year."

"What is it?" Harry asked.

"A long snouted heffalump," Hermione replied. "And I think I know where it will be hiding."

"You got a spell we can use to kill it?" Ron demanded.

"I've got a number of spells that are effective against them," Hermione replied smugly. "Let's learn them and go hunting."

"What would a quiet year be like?" Harry mused.

"We're gonna find out, mate," Ron assured his best friend. "We're gonna find out."

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Moody raised an eyebrow when three blood covered Gryffindors staggered in the next morning and bonelessly slumped onto their seats.

"Looks as if Harry's getting into trouble early this year," Dumbledore observed with a twinkle in his eye.

"Or Ms. Granger has finally convinced him to stop procrastinating and get proactive," Professor Sinistra replied.

"This sort of thing 'appen a lot then?" Moody asked.

"Usually not till after the first month."

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Harry was exultant. Finally he could find out what it was like to spend a couple months at Hogwarts without the constant specter of death hovering over his shoulder. Finally he could . . . he felt another chill go up his back.

"There must be another one about," Harry whispered to his friends. "I just felt another chill."

"It can't be another long snouted heffalump," Hermione fretted. "They're too territorial to willingly live in such close quarters."

"There must be something else," Ron agreed. "Or maybe there's a dark wizard sending in waves of them."

"I'll start looking for dark wizard detection spells then shall I?" Hermione sighed, she should have known it wouldn't be that easy.

Unnoticed by them all, a small blonde girl rose from her seat at the Ravenclaw table and skipped down the hall to the Defense Classroom.

IIIIIIIIII

Mad Eye swept into his classroom and fixed a withering glare on the student sitting in his chair, the same glare he used on the worst sorts of scum he'd had to deal with in his years on the force, politicians.

"Lovegood!" Moody barked.

"Yes, Grandpa?"

"Ten points to Ravenclaw for being so darned cute," the scarred man rasped. "Today we're going to learn how to . . ."

"Tell me the story of how you met grammie again!" Luna demanded.

"I really should be teaching defense," Moody replied. "How bout later?"

"Please," Luna begged, batting her eyelashes. "It's ever so educational."

"I suppose there's no harm in it," Moody broke, confirming once again that his cute little granddaughter had him wrapped right around her dainty little finger. "It was two weeks before Dumbledore stopped the dark bastard and things were looking grim. I was one of four survivors of my strike team holed up in an old church and the only one combat effective when it happened."

"What happened?" Luna cheered.

"The worst happened," Moody replied. "A succubus appeared. Now don't believe all the stories you hear about them, all they are is a prettier form of dementor. Though I will admit that the way they suck the life out of you is a lot more fun, one of the better way's to die I'm told. Not sure how anyone could test that theory, but there you go."



"What'd you do?" Luna prompted.

"I pulled myself to my feet, stared her in the chest, and complimented her rack." Moody grinned. "Figured I was gonna die anyway, may as well die doing what I loved. Staring at the nicest pair of tits I've ever seen in my life."

"Then what?" Luna giggled.

"Then she propositioned me," Moody replied. "She propositioned that if I was good enough to satisfy her, she wouldn't kill us all. We've been together ever since."

"Um . . . sir?" One of the students raised his hand.

"What?"

"Could you bring her in so we can see what a real live succubus looks like?" he asked hopefully.

"She's in hell at the moment visiting my in laws," Moody barked. "Only reason that twit was able to replace me. Any other questions?"

"Yeah," the boy agreed. "How did you get proficient enough to satisfy a succubus."

"Ask your grandmother," Moody replied with a leer. "Maybe she'll give you lessons if you ask nicely."

There were no more questions after that, there was at least one couple request to their Head of House after class to get their memories modified though.

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A very disheveled Harry, Hermione, and Ron staggered into the Great Hall for lunch and began shoveling food into their mouths.

"Care to explain why you three skipped class?" their Head of house demanded.

"We were clearing out a group of cultists in the catacombs beneath Hogwarts, Professor," Hermione answered.

"They were trying to raise some sort of dark god or something," Ron added. "Harry dueled the head priest, it was bloody brilliant!"

"Couldn't have done it if you two hadn't kept the rest of them off me," Harry said with a grin. "Did you see what Hermione did to the one in the black robes?"

"Bet the survivors will have nightmares about it," Ron chuckled. "Good job, Hermione."

"Thank you, Ron," the girl said primly.

"I see." Minerva sighed, it used to be such a quiet castle. "Carry on then."

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Dumbledore rose to his feet and allowed his benevolent gaze to sweep over the room. Once he was sure that he'd captured the student's attention, he began.

"May I have your attention, please?" He called out. "As you all know, Quidditch has been canceled this year." The old wizard waited for the groans to stop. "And that is so we can host the Triwizard Cup which I'm sad to say has not been held for quite some time due to all the messy deaths in the last tournament."

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The trio listened with growing unease as Dumbledore made his explanation, they knew it had been too good to hope that the old man wasn't in on it.

"Did you hear that?" Hermione whispered fiercely. "That must be how they're going to try to kill you this year, Harry."

"Yeah," Ron agreed. "Those chills you've been having must be a danger sense or something, bloody useful."

"You know what we have to do, right?"

"Layer so many wards over the cup that no one can get near it, then steal and substitute it with a fake." Hermione grinned. "Then we destroy the damned thing and enjoy a nice relaxing year."

"Agreed," Ron and Harry said together.

|||||||

Luna skipped into her grandfather's office that night and fixed him with her cutest and most innocent expression.

"Whadda want now?" he growled, eying the girl with a healthy dose of paranoia.

"I need to go to Hogsmead for some shopping," Luna replied.

"What sort of . . . forget I started asking that question," he said firmly. "Why can't you get yer da ta take you?"

"Father has forgotten he has a daughter at the moment and he is convinced that he is an emperor penguin named george," Luna replied with a frown. "Which is ridiculous since everyone knows that Magellanic Penguins are far superior. I know that if I were transformed into a penguin, I'd be beside myself if I were any other sort of penguin. Wouldn't you, grandpa?"

"Of course," he agreed. "I've got some time this weekend and I promise to take you so long as you promise not to tell me what you got or drag me into the store."

"Deal."

|||||||

The golden trio waited until everyone had gone outside to greet the other schools to make their move. Hermione was in the lead, it was her job to identify and bypass the protections around the Headmaster's office. Harry was next, ready to cast a protective shield over his friend in case she made an error. Ron took up the rear as lookout, he'd be the first one to identify and engage any meddling kids or nosy Professors."

"I'm in," Hermione whispered.

"That was easy," Harry murmured.

"Perhaps a bit too easy," Ron agreed.

"Worry about that later, we've got maybe two minutes to get in, grab a time turner, and get out."

"Right," Ron agreed.

They managed to get out with two seconds to spare before going back two hours. With their past selves providing the alibis, stealing the cup should be a piece of cake.

IIIIIIII

Luna skipped into the shop and straight to the scantily clad salesgirl behind the counter. After taking a moment to admire the leather corset the woman was wearing, Luna's palm came down to slap the service bell on the counter.

"Aren't you a bit young to be in a shop like this?" the woman asked.

"Why yes," Luna agreed. "Yes I am."

"Then get out of . . . wait, you look familiar." The woman frowned.

"Mummy used to bring me here a lot before she died," Luna offered.

"Luna?" The woman squealed. "It's been ages since I saw you."

"Hello, Aunt Trish," Luna said brightly.

"That age huh?" She gave the girl a knowing smirk. "Well, I suppose we'd better get you the works."

|||||

Long practice allowed Moody to ignore the odd looks on the faces of the passers by as he stood in front of the Naughty Witch Leather Emporium. That same practice allowed him to pretend he didn't know what his granddaughter was purchasing or what she'd purchased in the two shops she'd already visited; Bob's Ball Gags and Red's Whips and Restraints.

It was great being married to a succubus, he mused to himself. Hours of exotic sex, a wife that never lost her looks, the sex, a woman that was willing to do anything no matter how depraved, the sex, and the amazing sex.

"Finished," Luna chirped as she stepped out of the shop. "Only six more shops to go."

"What's next?" Moody asked.

"Stanley's Sex Toys," Luna replied. "You remember Stanley, right?"

"Yeah," Moody winced. Yep, it sure was great being married to a succubus until it came time to pay the piper. "I remember Stanley." Then it bloody sucked. They say that daughters are god's curse on a man for being a man, granddaughters were even worse.

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The golden trio huddled together for warmth as they waited for the other two schools to arrive. What in the hell had Dumbledore been thinking, insisting that they all waited outside for the others to arrive, it was like the old man wanted them to catch their death of cold.

"Turns out the Headmaster at Durmstrang is an ex-death eater," Ron announced. "What's say we go pay him a little visit later?"

"Good work, Ron," Hermione complimented the boy.

"Cup first or bastard first?" Harry asked.

"The Cup will likely play a big part in his plan to murder you, so I think it's best we disrupted his plans before we disrupt him," Hermione replied.

"Agreed." Ron nodded. "And if he doesn't pan out, we'll take out Hogwarts own Death Eater. Snape'll never know what hit him and I'll bet ten Galleons that potions scores go up five hundred percent."

"Ron, he's a teacher," Hermione scolded.

"How many teachers have tried to kill Harry so far?" Ron growled back.

"That's different," Hermione sniffed.

"How?" Ron demanded.

"Because they were Defense Professors," Hermione retorted. The trio froze. "Have we been over-thinking it?"

"Damn it," Ron shouted. "We've been going about this all wrong."

"You're right" Hermione groaned. "Who tries to kill Harry every year?"

"The Defense Professors," Ron returned.

"Professor Lupin?" Harry ventured.

"Did you forget getting attacked by a werewolf?" Ron asked.

"Point," Hermione sighed. "So what you're suggesting is that we go down and get preemptive?"

"I'm suggesting just that," Ron agreed. "Let's get preemptive."

"We'll jump Moody after we take care of the import," Harry said.  
"Agreed?"

"Agreed," Hermione said.

"Yeah," Ron echoed. "Cup, death bastard, Professor Bastard, Snape."

"Only if Moody isn't the threat," Hermione sighed. "If that's the case, we'll come down on Snape like a ton of bricks."

"Or we could just drop a ton of bricks on him," Ron mused. "Take care of a lot of problems that way."

"True," Harry agreed.

"I wonder if it would be better to transfigure them or to order them from in?" Hermione mused.

|||||||

Dumbledore pasted a stern expression on his face when the Defense Professor walked into his office, dropped into a chair, and propped his feet up on the desk.

"What'd ye want, Albus?" Moody demanded.

"There have been some concerns regarding the fact that you took a student shopping in Hogsmead," Albus said sternly.

"Rules say I gotta," Moody sighed. "Damn them and damn you for makin 'em!"

"Yes . . . well, it's not so much that you took a student shopping as what you took her shopping for," Albus tried.

"Wha'd ye expec?" Moody laughed. "Yeh ken what m'wife is."

"Yes . . . well . . . couldn't someone else have done it?"

"Her da thinks he' a penguin, her grand mam is in hell, Minerva said not even if her life bloody depended on it, and I'm all that's left," Moody explained. Just another piece of a large body of evidence suggesting that god hated him. "Unless you'd be willing to take care 'ah it for me?" Moody finished hopefully.

"Thank you, Professor Moody, that will be all."

|||||

Hermione held her breath as Harry switched out the Triwizard Cup for their carefully constructed forgery. It had taken seconds to get past the obvious protections and nearly ten minutes of looking before they'd concluded that there weren't any discrete protections around the ancient and priceless magical artifact. Still, it was still more than a bit nerve racking to have to find out the hard way if they were right or not.

"Got it in the dragon hide bag," Harry whispered.

"Coast is still clear," Ron announced.

"We've got no reason to stick around," Hermione hissed. "Let's get out of here and on to stage two."

"What's stage two?" Ron asked.

"A little trip abroad," Hermione replied. "I couldn't find any active volcanoes in the British Isles."

"Put up the wards before we go anyway?" Ron suggested.

"Why?"

"Longer it takes for them to notice it's missing, the better off we three are," he pointed out.

"Set it up," Harry commanded.

|||||



Moody and the Headmaster arrived only minutes after the Trio left the area around the Tri-Wizard Cup.

"What's this about incompetence on the part of the school administration?" Dumbledore demanded.

"I've known you since we knocked down the dark tosser, Albus," Moody growled. "And I know how you think, that's also why I . . ." he cut off to watch one of Snape's finest approach.

The wards began to hum as the Slytherin got too close and electricity began to arc and crackle in warning when the boy was dumb enough to continue his approach. A bolt of lightning shot out when he got within a meter of the Tri-Wizard cup followed by a dozen more. Draco fell to the ground squealing in pain as the wards repeatedly zapped him for presuming to get too close. He could see it perfectly fine from fifty meters away.

"Guess I was wrong about you, Albus," Moody admitted. "You didn't scrimp on protection after all."

"Er . . ."

"I figgered ye'd ha just used an age line or sommmthin stupid like that, guess I owe you an apology." Moody laughed. "Guess you can teach an ol'dog new tricks, eh?"

"Right," Dumbledore agreed, having no idea what was going on. "Quite right."

IIIIIIIIII

The golden trio stumbled into the Great Hall the next morning and took their customary places around the table. The other students quickly noticed that there was something off about them and decided to give Neville the task of ferreting out what it was.

"Uh . . . hey," Neville began nervously. "Some of us were wondering . . ."

"Yes?" Hermione asked, fixing the boy with an intense stare.

"Why do you guys smell like fire and brimstone?" Neville blurted.

"We had to drop something into a volcano," Ron replied.

"Oh . . ."

"Everyone finished?" Harry asked.

"Yeah," Hermione agreed.

"Just a sec." Ron made himself a large sandwich out of everything within arms reach. "Let's go."

IIIIIIIIII

All was quiet on the Durmstrang ship. Every student was gathered in the galley to hear their Headmaster speak when what should appear, but three masked figures to instill them with fear.

"Anyone goes for their wand, dies!" Hermione bellowed as the trio burst into the galley.

"We don't want to cause an international incident by killing you all, but we will if that's what it takes," Ron agreed.

"I want each teacher to come up here right bleedin now," Harry growled.

A quick check followed by an even quicker stun and incarceration charms confirmed that poor Igor was the only one with a dark mark. A bit of veritaserum and a dozen broken bones, due to Hermione not liking the man's tone, confirmed that the man was not planning to kill Harry Potter. It also revealed a bit of disturbing information that needed to be acted upon.

"Shite!" Harry cursed. "I was sure this was our guy."

"Language!" Hermione barked. "Okay, it's not a total loss. We can still portkey him to the Department of Magical Law Enforcement with a copy of his confession."

"Or we could just kill him now so he doesn't get a chance to bribe his way out of trouble," Ron suggested.

"Ron, I'm surprised at you," Hermione hissed. "Kill him here. Much better to kill him outside the galley, they eat here."

"You're right, Hermione, it wouldn't be hygienic," Ron sighed. "I'll drag him into the hall."

"Just try to think things through first next time," the girl sighed. She turned back to their captives. "On your bellies and count to a hundred!" Hermione screamed. "First person to stick their head out the door loses it."

After a quick bit of murder, the trio escaped the ship and regrouped in an empty classroom for a bit of pre-assault planning.

"Wasn't him," Ron pointed out.

"Which means that we have to go after Moody," Hermione agreed. "I know."

"Just pointing it out," Ron replied.

"Yes, you're a master of stating the obvious," Hermione sniffed. "The important thing isn't what we need to do, it's how we're going to do it."

"Spend the day in the library researching horrid spells to use?" Harry suggested.

"Or we could just walk down the hall and use the ones we already know on him," Ron rebutted.

As it happened, the results of going with Ron's plan proved to be less than ideal since the old Auror was more than a match for three battle hardened students.

"What in the hell were you lot thinking?" Moody growled, glaring at the bound forms of his three prisoners hanging from the ceiling.

"They were thinking that you were going to try to murder Harry Potter like all the other Defense Professors," Luna explained.

"Ah . . . we already took care of that one," Moody said thoughtfully. "Should'ha taken care of it the first week."

"We were dealing with a long snouted heffalump the first week, then a group of cultists, then the cup, then Durmstrang, and now you." Hermione sighed. "What could it be this year?"

"Fifteen points for constant vigilance," Moody commended them as he loosened their bonds. "Might want to take Luna along the next time you run into something sticky."

"I am more dangerous than a box full of cobras," Luna chirped.

The trio shared a moment of non-verbal communication before Harry gave a sharp nod and turned back to Luna. "With that stellar recommendation, how can we not give you a chance to show your worth."

"So long as you promise you're not planning to kill Harry first," Ron interjected. "It's not that we don't trust you-"

"It's that we don't trust anyone," Hermione finished.

"Another fifty points for showing a sensible attitude about the world around you," Moody barked. "Why haven't you three been showing this attitude in class?"

Hermione shot him a look of pure incredulousness. "And let you or the other students get an advantage by giving some idea of what we're capable of?"

"We'd have to be mad," Ron agreed. "Completely bonkers."

AN: Just a little something I've had on my HD for a while waiting to be finished.

Brain juice and editing by dogbertcarroll

Typos by: Brad Coleman, Hacklander Frank, Jenifer Winterbine, lucindas43302

Mini Omake:

"Heel!" Luna ordered, giving the leash a yank.

"Yes, Mistress," Fleur moaned happily.

"Veela," Luna sighed in exasperation.

AN: Someone mentioned the idea that Succubi and Veela might be rivals, that gave me the idea of them having a very different sort of relationship.

A trio of deleted scenes:

"Hello, Harry Potter." She shot him a look of pure lustful adoration.

"Hi, Luna," Harry replied nervously. A chill went up his spine, it was as if an enormous predator had just decided to have Harry sandwiches for lunch.

|||||

"I am a walking object of pure sex appeal," Luna announced proudly.  
"Inspiring lust in all who survey me."

"Aren't you a bit young for that?"

"Aren't you a bit old to be looking at an innocent girl such as myself?"  
Luna retorted, knowing that the most effective argument is to attack your opponent. "You deviant pervert."

|||||

"Hello, Harry Potter." Luna latched onto his arm. "You're my new boyfriend."

"I am?"

"Yup," Luna agreed.

"Hermione," he called out in panic. "Help!"

"Okay," Luna agreed. "But only the one."

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Omake by remiheikawa

Great stuff. Very inspiring.

This popped into my head at the end there so... OMAKE TIME  
WARNING: FLUFF OMAKE:

LOCATION: The great hall, TIME: breakfast.

"Hello, Harry Potter." Luna latched onto his arm the moment he stepped into the great hall with his friends. "You're my new boyfriend."

"I am?"

"Yup," Luna agreed. "Hermione," he called out in panic. "Help!"

"Okay," Luna agreed and wrapped a puzzled Hermione around her waist with her other arm. "But only the one."

"Um, Luna?" Harry asked hesitantly as his brain adapted to the unfamiliar and not quite unpleasant sensation of a non-Hermione

female voluntarily invading his personal space. He didn't have much of a clue what a relationship entailed aside from vague rumors floating around the dorms and How Vernon and Petunia behaved. Not the best of guidelines he thought.

"Yes Harry?" Luna purred sweetly as she led her new stoys/s... ehem, partners towards the breakfast table.

"What does a boyfriend..." He paused and glanced at Hermione and back at Luna "And his girlfriends do?"

Let no one say Harry Potter is not adaptable when new situations arise. Luna thought about it for a moment. That was a tough question. She knew what Lovers did, her mother made certain of that, but Boyfriends were not quite always lovers. She wasn't certain why this was so but that's what she gathered from listening to the Ravenclaws and she was willing to try new things.

"Well... For a start Boyfriends and Girlfriends are supposed to be very good friends. Hold hands, go on picnics, kiss, cuddle and generally do things together like spend the holidays doing fun things." She glanced at Harry and decided to nip some silly things she saw boys doing in the bud. "Boyfriends are supposedly responsible for the safety of their girlfriends. It always seemed silly to me. Daddy is a good wizard but mommy could take apart a squadron of aurors. So: If one of us is in danger the others get to come and have fun killing our enemies too."

Harry began to smile. That didn't seem so bad. In fact it sounded downright interesting, and that part about spending the holidays together downright slaughtered the last remainder of that feeling of dread he had. Fun things... He had a vague idea of finally getting to playing games and stuff on the playground without being chased off. "Promise me we'll spend holidays playing together and I'm in," He said.

Luna beamed a Lumos Maxima smile at him and crushed the three of them into a group hug. Some odd feeling of warmth spread in Harry's

chest. It was like a Herm-hug but only kinda. He wondered what it would do for his patronus.

As her brain rebooted Hermione processed what had been said while she was adapting. Friendship and mutual protection was pretty much on course as Hermione was concerned. As the comforting feeling of someone's arm around her waist ruthlessly drowned her sense of propriety Hermione relaxed and put her arm around Luna to steady herself.

"Promise me we'll spend holidays playing together and I'm in," Harry said and as Luna squished them all into a hug Hermione's mellow mood evaporated and her full attention snapped back into existence.

She never had the opportunity to just have fun with outside school. She wasn't getting left out of that! Not again! "Me too! I get to play too!" Hermione stated with almost desperate intensity and huge fearful eyes. Caught in a group hug Hermione's eyes had a devastating close range area effect and Harry's heart melted.

"Well of course you do silly," Muttered Harry and with daring he never knew he possessed he craned his neck a little and kissed Hermione on the forehead. After all, kissing was in the boyfriend requirements. It felt oddly good. The great hall was silent as the student body caught on.

Luna frowned a little as a thought occurred. It was good to keep communications clear in a multi-partner relationship. At least that's what her grandmother always said. "Dibs on his virginity," Luna stated into the silence.

END OMAKE

I had more ideas, like reactions and Ron surprisingly not blowing a gasket. Bet results being exchanged, Luna dealing with fangirls and such, but I ran out of time. Perhaps later.

Beta by dogbertcarroll



## MINI OMAKE

Midnight, Girl's dorm, Hogwarts.

"I HAVE A GIRLFRIEND!" Hermione yelled as she sat up from being half asleep as the days events caught up to her. Lavander sighed and reached into her bed stand, glared at a smug looking Parvati and tossed her a silver piece.

"A boyfriend too, and It's Harry. Go to sleep Hermione," a sleepy voice added into the suddenly shocked silence.

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Omake by Siaru74

Part-veela to part-succubus, probably not so. She already feels pursued by all of the males and a fair number of females besides. Here's a female with a certain fixity of expression which bodes ill... Plus, she can't transform, as, the closer she comes to the birdlike full transformation, the more the succubus will think of dining in rather than eating-out.

Luna, absently dodging the next fireball, was now positively drooling. "Harry," she purred in bedroom half-whisper as her gleaming eyes went slit-pupiled, "Legs or breast?"

"Hmm?" Harry responded, being too busy dodging more fireballs to give the question proper attention.

"As big as it is, there's more than enough to share if we choose wisely."

Omake by Nights Silhouette

4th year Defense Against the Dark Arts Class:

"Professor, can you tell us what happened to your eye," Hermione requested.

"Well." Moody said, "there's an interesting story behind that, but the long and the sort of it is the Misses and I had an argument over who's turn it was to do the washing up".

"She took your eye out over washing up?" Harry inquired, a note of panic in his voice as he cast an eye in the general direction he though Luna's Arithmancy class may be.

"Yeah," replied Moody. "But damn the make-up sex was... wow," he said, a far away look in his remaining eye.

"What happened to your leg then," Ron blurted out, a morbid sort of fascination on his face.

"Her pet dog," Moody growled

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Some unrelated Scenes/Omake by me:

Omake: Genre Savvy ver 2

"Well, for one thing, I think it's obvious that the cup is going to spit Harry's name out," Hermione began.

"No argument here," Ron agreed. "Sorry, mate, but you've got the worst luck."

"I've got the best luck or the legions of people trying to kill me would be competent," Harry countered.

"Point," Ron laughed. "So what are we going to do about it?"

"Spend hours in the library researching a way out of it," Hermione suggested.

"Good, I'll let you take that part. I'm going to be a jealous git that does his best to ruin his friendship with 'the-boy-who-lived' in hopes that one of the conspirators will confide in me," Ron offered.

"You can't possibly think they'd be that stupid," Hermione blurted.

"Think about all the others," Harry said gently.

"You're right, Ron, but I still think we should be planning for a more competent enemy so we're not taken by surprise if and when they appear."

"We'll do that too," Ron agreed. "I'm just saying that we shouldn't ignore the stuff that only total idiots would fall for since history has shown that the opposing team is made up of total idiots."

"Agreed," Hermione sighed. "So I'm the loyal research assistant, you're a jealous git, and Harry's the dashing hero."

"Why do I always have to be the dashing hero," Harry grumbled. "Why can't I be the jealous git, or the loyal research assistant, or any one of a number of other roles for a change?"

"Cause you got typecast, mate," Ron replied. "Should have never bounced that curse off your skull if you didn't want to be a boy hero."

"I can't wait till we get out of this place and can start our careers. Maybe something safe, like treasure hunting or spell research," Harry sighed.

"Those are two of the ten most dangerous jobs in the world, Harry," Hermione pointed out.

"More dangerous than our time at Hogwarts so far?" Ron demanded.

"I withdraw my objections," Hermione said primly. "After we graduate, we all become treasure hunting spell researchers. Agreed?"

"Agreed," the boys chorused.

Addition by Dark King

"Who do you think opened the Chamber of Secrets, Harry?"

"Isn't it obvious? Ginny is the only possible candidate."

"Oi! Why are you picking on my sister?"

"Because it is bound to be somebody we trust and would never normally suspect. Ginny is the newest person to our little clique, so she is the most likely candidate. New allies are always the most likely to be the hidden mole. Unless you're avoiding cliches, but our opponents aren't that bright."

"So, follow Ginny and see what she's up to?"

"Couldn't hurt..."

Cue the diary being found before the Christmas break.

Omake: Luna's Adventures in Time

"Oh my!" Luna exclaimed.

"What is it, darling?" her mother asked.

"I seem to have gone back in time to the moments before the accident that ended your life," the girl replied. "It seems you made a small error when doing your calculations."

"I see." The woman glanced down at the paper. "Here it is, oops."

"Indeed," Luna agreed. "Might I suggest you delay your experiment for a bit?"

"Of course, darling, anything for you," her mother agreed. "I trust you came back in time for a reason?"

"HmMMM?" Luna jerked her attention away from something particularly shiny. "Oh yes, I nearly forgot. Voldemort came back and was murdering everyone again, it was all quite unpleasant."

"I see, I imagine that would be quite unpleasant," her mother said with a nod.

"If you will excuse me, I must be off for a bit. It seems that Harry Potter, the key to defeating Voldemort, has an absolutely horrid home life."

"How awful, I suggest you deal with that situation post haste," her mother advised.

"I shall, mother," Luna agreed.

"And I shall be upstairs shagging your father while you're about it," her mother replied.

"Enjoy, mother."

"I shall, you be sure to enjoy rescuing Harry Potter."

"I shall, mother." Luna apparated to the edge of the Dursley wards and took a moment to examine them. They were quite good, she had to admit, a tweak here a nudge there and they were much better.

With a song in her kidney and an odd look on her face, the little girl skipped up to the door and jammed her finger on the doorbell. After three minutes of constant ringing, the sounds of rapidly approaching footsteps signaled that she'd gotten someone's attention.

The door swung open to reveal what must have been a walrus transfigured into human form. Poor thing must have been sick too, judging by the purple shade its skin had turned.

"What in the bloody hell do you want at this time of night!" the walrus bellowed.

"I'm just here to see Harry Potter," Luna explained, stepping past the walrus and into the house. "There's no need for you to trouble yourself on my behalf."

"Why you little!" Vernon's hands reached out to throttle the girl.

"I wouldn't do that if I were you," Luna warned. A spark jumped from one of her earrings and hit the man, causing him to start dancing a furious jig, complete with repeated strikes to the groin and face. They hadn't been in the original version of the hex, but Luna hadn't liked the way the arms had just folded across the chest in version number one. Version number two was, at least in her opinion, much more visually appealing.

A wave of the girl's hand ripped the cupboard door off its hinges and Luna stuck her head through the opening to examine the grubby boy within.

"Hello, I'm Luna Lovegood, your future . . ." she trailed off. Hermione had repeatedly told her that such language was not suitable in front of children. Or was it the other sort of language that wasn't suitable in front of children? The girl scratched her chin, hmmm.

"Future what?" Harry asked.

"Friend I suppose, very good friend," Luna pronounced. "I'm here to help you."

Harry jerked his eyes from the girl to the flailing, screaming, and now heavily bruised Vernon Dursley. "You have," he said, a grin splitting his face.

"Oh my no, that's just because he was rude enough to attempt to throttle me," Luna said with a wide grin. Two more hand waves cleaned the boy and did something else. "Perhaps you could call the others?"

The other two Dursleys arrived just as Vernon collapsed into a groaning heap on the floor, the in person reminder of what magic was capable of injecting a bit of caution into Petunia.

"Thank you all for coming," Luna chirped. "I've asked you here today to explain the charm I've cast on Harry. Any damage done to him will be transferred to the lump over there." She motioned towards what she suspected was a hag fish in human form. "Any questions?"

Two blank looks met her question, Dudley's and Petunia's. Vernon was too busy wishing he was dead and Harry was much too busy enjoying the show.

"Very well, Harry, would you mind helping me with something?" Luna requested.

"What is it?" Harry asked, turning to his new best friend ever.

"I want you to know that this is going to hurt him more than it hurts you," Luna said before brutally backhanding the boy, causing the other boy across the room to squeal like a man that had canoed down the wrong river.

"Why'd you do that?" Harry demanded, a look of betrayal on his face.

"Did it hurt?" Luna prompted.

"No," Harry said, a look of wonder in his eyes.

"YES!" Dudley disagreed.

An evil look appeared on Harry's face as he pinched and twisted the skin on the back of his hand, causing Dudley to shriek.

"I wouldn't do that past tonight if I were you," Luna advised. "Much of the magic will dissipate when the sun rises. After that, only injuries caused directly or indirectly by the Dursleys will transfer." And once he got to Hogwarts, she'd cast another, similar spell, targeting a few Slytherins.

"Thanks!" Harry cheered.

"My pleasure," Luna said brightly. "Toodles." She'd visit him again in a couple days to see how he was doing, in the mean time, she had other things to get done. A time traveler's work was never done until it was.

Beta by dogbertcarroll, the Lamont Cranston of fic Authors.

Omake: Neville

Every head turned when the door was kicked in. Every jaw dropped when they saw who it was and how he was dressed.

"It's sodomy time, bitches!" Neville screamed, the boy was wearing a jock strap, a domino mask, some obscene body paint, and a pair of engineering boots. "Are you ready to . . . uh . . . there's a perfectly good explanation for this," the boy finished shyly.

"I'm sure there is," Voldemort agreed calmly. "Potter, why don't we finish this another time?"

"Yeah, I'm going to be too busy getting obliterated to have a fight to the death right now," Harry agreed.

"You see, it was Hannah's birthday and . . ." Neville stammered, trying to explain himself. "I must have burst into the wrong room and . . ."

"As will I," Voldemort said to Harry. By unspoken agreement, both of them were ignoring the shy Gryffindor.

"Why don't we pick things up next year?" Harry suggested. "Or have a big fight at the end of this one?"

"I'll owl you," Voldemort agreed. "Severus, order the boy out of the doorway so that we may leave."

AN: Thought about adding a couple similar scenes with a final scene of Neville talking to Luna, asking if he could stop because it was embarrassing and Luna telling him that Harry isn't ready to face



Voldemort and that he could stop after Harry was ready and Voldemort was gone for good.

"But how long will that be?" Neville asked.

"Shouldn't be more than fifty or sixty years," Luna replied.

Omake: VENGEANCE IS . . . you're not really going to . . . uh.

"I have my majority," Harry said with a cruel smile. "Do you know what that means?"

"That's right!" Dudley said brightly. "I have my majority too, so I don't have to hide anymore."

"Do you mean it, Dudders?" Vernon asked hopefully.

"I mean it, Dad," Dudley agreed, "I love you and I don't care who knows it. Let's get out of here so we can get to the consummating."

The other two severely shocked residents of the house watched the two morbidly obese men share a passionate kiss.

"I'd carry you to the car, but you're such a solid man," Vernon said with a horrific grope.

"Right back at you," Dudley replied with a grope of his own.

It was another five minutes before Petunia could fight through her horror to do what came naturally to her.

"This is all your fault, boy!" Petunia shrieked. "Of all the bloody things to do with your magic, you had to do something so sick and unnatural as that!" she sobbed. "What have I done that I deserve that?"

"I didn't do that," Harry said, fighting down the bile. "I'll admit that I did curse all three of you, but not with . . . I . . ." He swallowed. "I think I'm almost as horrified and disgusted as you are." It was Petunia's suffering that made him feel a bit better. "Dudley is incompetent at

everything so I hit him with incontinence, incoherence, and hemorrhoid curses since I couldn't think of another word that began with in." He took a deep breath to soothe his rebelling stomach. "Vernon is a pustulant wart on the ass of humanity so I cursed him with: piles, pissing uncontrollably, priapism, and incontinence since I thought it would be funny."

"What did you do to me?" Petunia asked sickly.

"You're a gossip so I cursed you with: goats, gossip, and well . . . a lot of other things." He flicked his wand. "Now you're just cursed with goats and gossip. No matter where you go, no matter what you do, people will know all about you."

"And goats?"

"Have you ever been around goats before? Unpleasant smelly creatures. Now they'll follow you around." Harry glanced at his bare wrist. "Look at the time, I've got to go get my memories erased. Be never seeing you again, Aunt Petunia."

Beta by dogbertcarroll, the Batman of Betas.

Omake: Knows 'is own strength.

"Step outside, 'arrie," Hagrid ordered. He waited till the boy was out of sight before bringing a massive hand to rest on Vernon's shoulder, the other closed on the man's skull. "You know, all ah'd have to do was squeeze." He tightened his grip. "Don't know that anyone would care if I did, wouldn't harm the blood protection any, no reason not to."

"Please," Vernon squeaked.

"Don't think I didn't notice how Harry favored his side, don't think I didn't notice his scars," Hagrid growled. "Don't think I'd miss a wink of sleep." His stare bored through Vernon's skull. "Nothing to say, 'tunia?"

"Please don't," she sobbed.

"Only one thing that's keeping your husband alive right now and that's the fact that I don't want to 'ave to clean blood off my hand, be hard to keep little 'arry from noticing," Hagrid said calmly, loosening his grip a bit. One quick twist snapped Vernon's neck, ending the man's life. "Oops, guess I don't know me own strength sometimes," Hagrid said calmly.

dogbertcarroll

Omake: Pawns of Prophecy

Sybil staggered into the Great Hall and began to speak. "The web of prophecy has been broken and an old hero must step to the fore. The leader of the light, proponent of the greater good shall have the power the Dark Lord knows from his days in the Slytherin Common room. The leader of light shall bugger the Dark Lord to death as the seventh month dies, and if that doesn't work maybe some Auror will kill the bastard." Sybil seemed to regain her senses. "Oh my, whatever has happened?"

"Nothing you need concern yourself with," Dumbledore said with a wide grin on his face, now there was a prophecy he could get behind. "Severus, I think you know what potions I need you to brew."

Luna grinned, maybe she could ask her Aunt Sybil to 'prophecize' a certain boy with a mutilated forehead asking an unnamed blonde Ravenclaw out on a date? No, she decided, much better to make things so obvious that even Ron could figure it out. Wouldn't do to have Harry ask the wrong blonde out.

IIIIIIIIII

Sybil cleared her throat, unfocused her eyes, stood, and began speaking in what her beloved niece called her 'spooky prophecy voice,' "the one with the lightening bolt scar on his forehead in Gryffindor that is the son of James and Lily Potter should be advised that there is a perky blonde Ravenclaw named Luna Lovegood that he should ask out on a date." She took in a breath. "Bad things would happen if he didn't, he was once the subject of a nastier prophecy

and it wouldn't be difficult to make him the subject of an even nastier prophecy." She paused to think about the next line. "One that involves castration if he hurts Luna Lovegood in any way." She wiped off the dazed look and glanced around. "Oh my, what just happened? It feels just like it did the other day."

"I didn't notice anything," Dumbledore said innocently, "did anyone notice anything?"

"The prophecy she just gave?" Ron asked hesitantly. "Um, everyone else heard that, didn't they?"

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Omake: Courage

"What is it?" Deloris snapped.

"I . . . I just wanted to tell you that we all understand how brave you are for taking the defense job," Neville stammered.

"What?" she gave him an odd look.

"Well . . . it's just . . . you know what happened to the other Defense Professors, don't you?" Neville looked like he'd rather be anywhere else at the moment. "We figured that's why you took the job, to put an end to all that."

"What happened to them?" the toad faced woman demanded.

Um . . . Harry burned the first one to death, obliterated the second, turned the third into a werewolf, had the fourth replaced by a polyjuiced death eater and then had the death eater kissed, and it's rumored he's done loads of other stuff." Neville reached over to take the woman's hand. "I'd never be able to do what you're doing. Death is one thing, but some of the things Harry's done?" He shivered. "But I'm sure you'll survive and get enough evidence to finally stop him. We knew the Ministry would step in, we just knew it!"

"That really happened to all of them?" Umbridge looked a bit nervous.

"And you took the job despite the fact that the best you could hope for was being turned into a werewolf," Neville agreed. "I also heard that Harry tried to feed Professor Snape to it after the transformation, but no one knows for sure. Just know that all of us are rooting for you, Professor."

"Um . . ."

"Could I have an autograph?" Neville persisted. "And a photo? I'm sure you'll be able to survive the year, but if you don't, well . . . I'd really like to have a memento of the bravest women I've ever met."

"Not right now," Deloris hustled the boy out of her room. "I just remembered that I need to floo the Minister."

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Omake: Predictable

"The new DADA professor is possessed by Voldemort and trying to kill Harry Potter!" Aurora wheezed.

"Again?" Flitwick groaned.

"Pay up," Minerva chuckled, collecting her winnings.

"This never would have happened if you'd have given me the job," Snape grumbled.

"Aren't you going to do something?" Aurora demanded.

"Alas, we cannot," Dumbledore sighed. "He has tenure."

"I've been working here for five years and I don't have tenure." Aurora was outraged. "How come he gets it before the term even starts?"

"It's one of the conditions demanded by most applicants before they'll even consider taking the job," Dumbledore explained.

"So there's nothing we can do about it?" Aurora asked.

"I didn't say that," Dumbledore replied, eyes twinkling like mad. "Minerva, would you be so good as to have a quiet word with Mr. Potter before the feast?"

"Of course, Albus," Minerva agreed.

"Thank you, Minerva," Dumbledore replied. "Now then, does anyone have any suggestions for our next Defense Professor?"

IIIIIIII

"Eek!" Snape squealed, dodging the curse. It was an impressive display of athleticism which, while allowing him to avoid one attack, placed him into the path of several more.

"Mr. Potter, what are you doing?" Minerva demanded.

"But you said one of the Professors was going to kill me this year and suggested that it might be a good idea to be a bit preemptive," Harry replied, confusion coloring his features.

"Not him." Minerva waved at the moaning man. "Him!" She pointed at the Voldemort possessed Professor.

"Well of course he is," Harry agreed.

"Hogwarts tradition," Hermione piped up.

"But not till the end of the year," Harry continued. He turned to the professor. "May fifteenth work for you?"

AN: Got the idea for this scene from Sarah1281's story "When In Doubt, Obliviate"

Beta by dogbertcarroll – but you already knew that, didn't you.

AN: Wondergirl

"Thanks, Luna, you saved me," Harry panted.

"I'm not Luna," the masked girl informed him. "I'm . . . uh . . . Wondergirl, defender of cute boys."

"Okay," Harry agreed.

"Speaking of Luna, I've been reliably told that she could suck a golf ball through six feet of garden hose," Masked Luna continued

"Really?"

"Yes, and her breasts are the most perky you'll find at Hogwarts."

"Good to know, but why are you telling me all this?"

"Just making conversation."

AN: It's Wondergirl, and her never ending quest to get her alter ego laid

Omake: Cuttin me own throat.

"And this is enchanted not to hurt anyone from the Malfoy family?" Draco demanded, admiring his new blade.

"Of course," Luna agreed. "Try chopping off one of your hands with it."

With an arrogant grin, Draco braced his arm against the table, swung his sword, and neatly severed his left arm.

"Arrrrrrgggg!" he squealed, trying to stem the blood spurting out of his new stump.

"Or did I enchant it to only hurt Malfoys?" Luna mused, ignoring the screaming boy. "I really need to learn to be more focused about these things. Oh well, no one can say Luna Lovegood doesn't own up to her mistakes. I'll let you have the blade for ten percent less than if I

hadn't made that mistake, a better deal you won't find and that's cuttin me own throat."

AN: Inspired by slicerness

Omake: Absentee Parents

"Yes?" Harry answered the door. His eyebrow raised when he saw two familiar looking people on his doorstep.

"It's us," the man said.

"We're back," the woman agreed, eyes gleaming.

"Uh huh." Harry's eyes were flat. "Just because you look a bit like my parents, doesn't mean I'm going to give you any money. Now bugger off!" With that, Harry slammed the door on the two idiots who'd darkened his door. It was depressing how used to this sort of thing he was getting since he'd defeated Voldemort. 'Maybe I should think about moving to another country?' he mused to himself.

Hoping that he'd seen the last of the two on the step, Harry retreated into his flat to make himself breakfast. As things would have it, he hadn't.

"You don't understand," the woman who bore a striking resemblance to his departed mum said as she accosted him on his way out after he'd eaten. "Dumbledore said that we had to send you to Petunia, otherwise you wouldn't have been strong enough to defeat 'you-know-who' and he'd triumph."

"This is getting tiresome," Harry sighed. "Tell you what, if you and your accomplice agree to leave me alone, I won't have you both arrested. Understand?"

"We really are your parents," the woman said, tears in her eyes.

"You expect me to believe that any parent would be willing to send their child to spend their life in an abusive home?" Harry laughed. "I'm



sure that mine weren't saints, but there's no way they were the monsters you're pretending they are."

The woman reacted like he'd struck her. With a shrug, Harry turned away and began whistling a jaunty tune.

The husband accosted him on the way back from the store.

"Call the Aurors!" the man demanded.

"What?" Harry glanced at the annoyance.

"Call the Aurors and one of three things will happen. The first is that they'll cart us off and you'll never see us again because we'll be in jail, the second is that they'll cart us off and you'll never see us again because we'll be placed in a hospital for the incurably insane, the third is that they'll prove we're telling the truth and that we are your parents."

"Fine, wait somewhere they can find you," Harry requested. He'd make that floo call as soon as he got home and he'd hopefully get at least a couple days of peace before the next batch of nut jobs arrived.

Three hours later, there was another knock on his door. The idiots had returned and they had two very nervous Aurors with them.

"There some reason you brought them here?" Harry asked flatly.

Tonks winced at the look in Harry's eyes. This was not going to be good at all. "I think Shack would be the one to tell you," she said nervously.

"Every test we have shows that they are who they say they are," Shack said tonelessly.

"I see. Did you try veritaserum?"

"We did," Tonks agreed.

"Which proves that they believe what they're saying," Harry continued, "what about . . ."

"Right down to testing the DNA," Shack interrupted.

"Hermione invented a new spell for us last week," Tonks explained.

"A few possibilities present themselves," Harry began. "The first is that you made a mistake, the second is that they tricked you, the third is that you're with them, the fourth is that my parents are monsters. In any case, I don't wish to see them again. If there's nothing else?" He glanced around. "Good day."

He closed the door and started to walk away when some idiot began pounding on it. "What?"

"What do you mean you don't want to see us again?" the man demanded.

"We'll play the devil's advocate, shall we?" Harry asked, his voice hard as flint. "If you're telling the truth it means that my parents cared so little for me that they abandoned me with the Dursley family, an abusive set of bigots. It also means they cared so little for my godfather that they abandoned him to Azkaban, and now they want me to smile and pretend it never happened? How would you react to people like that?"

"But . . . Dumbledore said . . ." the woman stammered.

"It was necessary," the man agreed. "Dumbledore said you'd understand and forgive us."

"Dumbledore lied about quite a few things," Harry dismissed them. "Now leave and never darken my door again."

Harry started to close the door, only to have the man block it with his foot. "We're not leaving until you listen to us," the man growled.

"Tonks, if his foot isn't out of my house by the count of ten, I'm going to kill him as an illegal trespasser, do you understand?"

This prompted a gasp from the woman and nervous looks to appear on the Aurors' faces.

"I understand, Harry," the woman agreed. She stunned the man and pulled him into the hall.

Harry put a silencing charm on his door and walked to the fireplace to make a call. He had a favor to ask and a friend to contact.

It was two weeks of constant harassment before Hermione was able to get back to him with a progress report and another week after Luna joined the project that the two were able to report that they'd managed to fulfill his request. It was time to have another meeting with the nuts.

"Harry," the woman sobbed, "I knew you'd come around!"

"We Potters may get angry, but the rage burns out pretty quick," the man said proudly.

"You misunderstand," Harry interjected. "I invited you here because I needed you for something. You see, I've grown rather tired of your actions so I asked a couple friends to help me find a way around it since the Ministry was its usual useless self."

"Find a way . . ." The woman paled.

"Let's not do anything we're going to regret later, son," the man said.

"I have a charm here that will make me invisible to you and only you, oddly enough it will do the same in reverse. Not only that, I won't be able to hear you, to touch you, to smell you, again the same will happen in reverse. You won't be able to have others pass communications on to me since the second they're in my presence, they'll be unable to utter a word regarding you and neither you nor anything from you will be able to come within ten meters of me. I'll have my peace and you'll be forced to bugger off and bother someone else."

"You can't do this to us," the woman sobbed, "do you realize how hard it was to give you up?"

"I've always maintained that you two are not my parents and if that's the case, I don't see how this harms you much," Harry began.

"But we are!" the man insisted.

"And if that's the case and you really do wish to get to know me, the son you threw away, then let the punishment fit the crime," Harry intoned. "If you are my parents, know that I hate you, I loathe you, I wish you nothing but ill, I wish you to know nothing but pain since that's all I knew at the place you abandoned me!" With that, Harry triggered the spell and went back to his quiet life.

AN: Not too fond of the hidden parents story line that some people like to play with.

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Omake: Dobby Protects

Harry frowned as he watched the his blonde friend skip off. To say he wasn't pleased by the picture that was forming in his mind was an understatement, but what to do about it?

"Dobby!" Harry called out.

"Yes, Harry Potter sir?" the little elf replied.

"Could you do me a favor?"

"What is it, Harry Potter sir?" he asked intently.

"I've heard that Luna's dorm mates don't treat her the best," Harry confided. "Could you look after her? I can't get into Ravenclaw tower."

"Dobby can look after Harry Potter sir's Loveygood," the elf agreed. "Does Harry Potter sir wish Dobby to watch his other friends?"

"I'd appreciate it," Harry agreed. "Thank you, Dobby."

"Dobby is happy to be of service, Harry Potter sir."

Harry promptly forgot about his request. He had other things on his mind, besides, what could a house elf do?

He didn't think much of it when he learned that two of Luna's dorm mates had fallen down a stair case and broken several bones, it didn't seem relevant. It was Hogwarts, a place where accidents happened with depressing regularity. It never occurred to the boy that his experiences at the school were far from the norm.

On the up side, Luna's life at Hogwarts became much more pleasant when word got around that accidents befell any who tormented her. On a minus, it caused her to attract attention to the wrong sort since the victims of those accidents, rotten as they were, often came from larger families.

Luna awoke to find herself surrounded by masked figures. It appeared that she'd been kidnapped by death eaters. This was going to play hell with her day. A slight frown appeared on the girl's face, this had better not make her late to her runes class.

"Good afternoon, Uncle Lucius," Luna said calmly. "Should I assume that you murdered father?"

"Not yet," the lead figure removed his mask. "I thought I'd leave your desecrated corpse on the doorstep as a present to my dear brother in law."

"I see." Luna cocked her head. "I take it your plans were gang rape followed by torture and murder?"

"They are," Lucius agreed. "I'd normally start things off myself since we're family, but it's Michael's initiation so he has the honor." Lucius put his hand on the shoulder of a smaller death eater.

"I'm afraid that doesn't work for me," Luna replied. "You see, I belong to Harry Potter. That means he has exclusive sexual rights to my body." She paused. "Unless of course he decides to bring in another girl, I can't say that I'm adverse to the notion, or any other thing that might make him happy," she admitted, eyes glazing as she went to her happy place for a bit. "So I'm afraid that your plans are going to have to be changed. Perhaps Draco would like to take my place, at least for the first bit?" She did owe the boy for her seventh birthday after all, what better way to pay it back?

"You act as if you had a choice in all this," Lucius laughed. "I think we'll let Peter go second, I'm sure your dear Potter will be thrilled by that."

A loud bang caused the room to shake and dust to fall from the rafters.

"What was that?" Peter simpered.

"He's heeere," Luna giggled. "One two, Dobby's coming for you. Three four, better lock the door."

"Shut that bitch up," Lucius ordered.

"You're all gonna diiiieee," Luna sang.

"Dobby is sorry he took so long, Ms. Loveygood," the little elf apologized.

"You got here before they managed to steal something that belongs to Harry," Luna replied.

"Av. . ."

Without looking, Dobby banished a chair into his former master, shattering the man's skull.

"Harry would probably be pleased if you took the one named Peter alive," Luna advised. "They seemed to think that it would displease

Harry to learn that I was forced to service him, so I believe that Harry may wish to deal with the man himself."

"Yes, Ms. Loveygood," Dobby agreed. "What about the rest?"

"I do not believe that Harry would like for any of them to leave this room alive," the girl said.

"Dobby understands, Ms. Loveygood," the little elf agreed. Around the room pieces of furniture rose to float in the air. "Which one is Peter?"

"I am!" Peter squealed, willing risk a probable death in the future as opposed to a certain death in the present.

AN: Had intended to do something more with this, just never got around to it. It's been mentioned that the title would better fit a fic about Dobby-the god emperor of mankind, can't say I disagree.

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Addition by ubereng

"Dobby noes that this one is Peter, because he used to hang around The Great Harry Potter's weezy.

"But Dobby is confused about why he'd want Loonygood. Dobby noes that Peter spent the last 14 years sleeping with little boys."

Omake! By slickrcbd

"No, he's named Dick. I'm Peter!" screamed one of the smarter Death Eaters

"Nice try, Amacus, but I'm Peter!" yelled another one

"No, I'm Peter!"

Dobby went about killing the ones who were still resisting, soon all the remaining Death Eaters started claiming to be named Peter.

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Addition by: daenerys5539

"Dobby understands, Ms. Loveygood," the little elf agreed. Around the room pieces of furniture rose to float in the air. "Which one is Peter?"

There was a moment of silence as the Death Eaters looked at Lucius remains, the abundance of ready missiles already aimed at each individually.

"I am!" The chorus of replies came rapidly.

Addition by Dark King

"You're all gonna diiiieee," Luna sang.

The door exploded as an outraged house elf burst through it.

"Heeeeeeeeeeeere's Dobby!" it growled. The assembled Death Eaters didn't notice the fire axe gripped in the elf's hands.

Final AN: Just another chapter of things I've swept out of my HD.

Beta by dogbertcarroll



Disclaimer: I've had a few requests for more background information in my Dungeons 'n Drow story (Odd Ideas 133). Well, here it is.

## Background

### Omake: In the Army

Harry cursed the lack of funds that had prevented him from bribing his way out of the conscription act and the lack of warning that had prevented him from doing a runner. The nation he was in had decided to declare war on some other nation that he didn't care about. This wouldn't have bothered him if it weren't for the aforementioned fact that his nation of residence had decided not to let him stay out of it.

Which was how he found himself on the front lines doing his best to do unto the other bastards before they did unto him. The first few months of the war had quickly fallen into a routine of sleep, eat bad food, march to a battle, and do his best to remain in a large enough piece to be able to march to the next. In other words, it was mind numbingly boring.

Thankfully for Harry's sanity, something happened to break the monotony. It was the best thing that could have happened to him, pity he didn't realize that at the time.

"Captain wants to see you, Harry," the man's orderly relayed.

"What's he want?" Harry replied.

"Scouts lost another mage, guess who gets to replace the poor bastard?"

"Ten gold to say you couldn't find me?" Harry suggested hopefully.

"Captain told me I'd take your place if I couldn't find you," the orderly replied.

"Damn it!" Harry debated his chances of being able to successfully desert for a few moments before finally deciding they weren't good enough to bother with at the moment. With a curse on his lips, he

began gathering up his things. He'd heard a rumor that the Headmaster at the academy had been the one to suggest conscription of apprentice mages, Harry vowed that should that turn out to be true and should he also survive the war, that he'd see the man die a slow death unless someone else was fortunate enough to get to him first.

Harry followed the orderly back to the Captain's tent and into it to find his new unit already waiting. They were a tough looking group of men in leather armor, all dressed in flat, dull, earth like colors.

"Doesn't look like much," one of the larger men sneered. He took a menacing step towards Harry, causing Harry to take a step back in response. "Look at 'im cower from me," he laughed, taking another step.

Harry darted forward, burying his left foot in the man's groin, left hand swinging forward to clout the man senseless with a slungshot.

"Who's next?" Harry asked calmly, a ball of flame appearing in his right hand, the slung shot, a lead ball tied into a monkey fist knot, ready to knock another man senseless in his left.

"I like 'im," one of the men said with a grin, "can we keep 'im, Sarge?"

AN: A 'slung shot' is a piece of grapeshot in the middle of a monkey fist knot with a foot or two of rope as the handle. Illegal to carry in a lot of old port towns and costal states.

Omake: When Harry met Min

Life was cheap in Drow society, it was almost not worth living if one had the misfortune to be born a male. He'd realized at a very young age a way to carve himself a partial exception; step one was to become valuable, step two was to become too dangerous to be kept close to home. The first wasn't that hard, a dozen decades studying magic was all it took. He'd managed it before his two hundredth birthday. Step two had required some thought, the trick was to not let the danger he presented outweigh the value he represented. In the end, he rather thought he'd found an elegant solution. Absent

mindedness, sure he'd blown up the east hall, but only because he'd been distracted by this fascinating treatise that had permitted him to construct these enormously valuable magical items. Don't you think they'll benefit the clan?

What had followed had been a short but painful punishment and an exile to a relatively private tower five days travel from the clan's seat of power. That distance had allowed him the sort of power most males only dreamed of. So it's to be understood why he was less than pleased when his youngest sister arrived for a visit.

"Good day, Min," he said, trying not to show the tension he felt upon recognizing his visitor. "Does mother want something?"

"If you call me 'Min' again, I shall see you eat your own testicles, brother," the young Drow maiden growled. "Mother is dead, you will provide shelter for me while I plan my next move."

"Which one is the new Matron?" he asked, sounding bored by the whole thing.

"The eldest." And the bitch had not wasted a second of time eliminating her siblings. On the plus side, being the youngest had meant that she was relatively low on the priority list. It hadn't been easy to slip out of the city, but it was much safer than the alternative.

"Okay . . . um, maybe the red room . . . no, that still has pieces of the thing I accidentally summoned last week. There's a bed in the . . . no, it's covered in books . . . hmm . . ."

"I shall be taking your bedroom, brother," the young maiden sniffed. "Show it to me and then make yourself useful, I shall be needing a new set of weaponry and armor."

"But where will I sleep?" he asked, pasting a look of stupefied confusion on his face.

"In the stables with the other animals for all I care, now move!" she barked.

"This way," he said, injecting a tone of hurt into his voice.

He waited until his sister was asleep before casting a dozen spells to insure that she did not awaken at an inconvenient time. It did not take long to receive a message from the new Matron; he was instructed to continue his research and to keep an eye out for his youngest sister, a rich reward was promised for information leading to her capture.

To be sure, he cast a couple more spells on the sleeping maiden as he tried to decide what to do. Informing the Matron would be a last resort, something to do only if he suspected she already had some clue on where the youngest might have run.

He was still mulling over the problem the next day on the arrival of the apparently human mage that had been adventuring in the area with his group. Not many creatures could survive an extended stay in the Underdark and he refused to believe that a human could consistently beat him, a master with more than a hundred years of practice at chess. Hence, his caution when dealing with the creature.

"What do you want?" he demanded as he left his stronghold. The creature had refused, as yet, to have any meetings under protections that he did not control. The compromise they'd worked out was to have their games outside, where there were no protections.

"Managed to acquire a couple spell books I thought you might be interested in," the apparent human replied, being very careful not to block his companion's shot.

"How much, human?"

"You know I never sell things. If you want them, you'll have to win them."

IIIIIIIIII

Harry grinned as the Drow mulled it over, he knew the man wouldn't be able to resist getting fleeced again and Harry couldn't resist doing it since his group was in the area. The others didn't like his

association with the Drow, didn't understand how valuable it was to have a local source of information. The things the man had let slip during games more than made up for the occasions that Harry let him win and the rare occasions he actually did.

"Let me see the books," the Drow demanded.

"I'll show you one of them," Harry conceded. He checked to make sure that his companions were in position. Just because he was willing to deal with a Drow mage, didn't mean he was stupid. He never set up a meeting without at least four hidden bowmen and the rest of the group concealed close enough to be of some use if a fight did break out. Harry reached into his pack to pull out a book, seemingly at random. "Found it as part of a horde."

"What sort of horde, where?"

"We could gamble for that information instead, if you don't want to wager for the books," Harry replied.

"I'll wager a thousand gold," the Drow offered.

"Five thousand per book," Harry said firmly.

"Five thousand total," the Drow countered.

"Five thousand per book or I'm walking away and you can forget ever having the opportunity to touch one of them again," Harry replied.

"Fine," the Drow growled.

"Set up the board," Harry said. It was hard not to grin, this was higher than he'd ever been able to talk the skinflint up to ever before. "Best of three?"

"Best of five, human!" the Drow barked.

"Of course," Harry agreed.

Harry let the Drow win the first game in an attempt to get him to raise the stakes, that failed so he crushed the bastard in the next game, suffered a draw in the next, and had two quick victories after that.

"Seems you owe me quite a bit of gold," Harry said easily.

"Accursed human," the Drow grumbled.

"Payment to be made immediately if you want to remain mostly watertight," Harry continued, signaling for the archers to make themselves visible.

"I know the rules, human," the Drow spat. A crafty gleam appeared in the Drow's eye. "Perhaps you could be persuaded to make a deal?"

"I think I'd rather have the gold," Harry countered.

"I find myself a bit short on liquid assets at the moment," the Drow admitted.

"What sort of deal?" Harry sighed.

"What would you give for a young female of the noble class, untouched so far as I know." Meaning more valuable for sacrifice or rendering into spell components. "Not even a hundred years of age." For a couple months.

"Where might you find one of those on such short notice?" Harry asked.

"My youngest sister happens to be in my keep at the moment," the Drow replied.

"You're trying to sell me your sister to pay off your gambling debts?" Harry asked with a grin. "Imagine your Matron might object to that sort of behavior.

"The new Matron has offered a rather substantial reward for information on her whereabouts, but I thought I'd offer you a chance to pick her up first. If I give her to you, she'll live. I give her to the

Matron, she won't. It's not a hard choice, she is family after all." And the bitch probably wouldn't cough up the gold she'd promised, might even motivate her to keep a closer eye on him. No, better if his dear youngest sister were to disappear. Since she had to disappear anyway, she may as well help her older brother keep a bit of gold in his pocket.

"Fine," Harry agreed, knowing that he'd regret it. "But I'm going to want you to throw in a few things to sweeten the pot."

"What sort of things?" the Drow asked suspiciously.

"Your new acid bolt spell, your new shield spell, and the sword I lost to you last week," Harry replied.

"Agreed," the Drow replied.

"Have everything brought here," Harry directed. "Another game while we wait?"

"Of course," the Drow agreed, motioning for one of his servants to fetch the things. "Care to place a wager on the outcome?"

"How bout that new sword of mine?" Harry suggested.

"Deal," the Drow agreed.

Harry played a fair game, allowing the Drow to narrowly defeat him on the cusp of his victory. It was always a good way to leave the bastard in a good mood after spending the day emptying his pockets.

The servants returned dropping the girl and the sword at Harry's feet.

"She likes to be called Min," the Drow said as he snatched up the sword. "I wouldn't suggest staying in this section of the Underdark, the new Matron will not be happy if she hears that a human possesses her prey." The sooner the adventurers disappeared with his sister, the safer it would be.

Omake: Care for your tools

A smile lit Harry's face at the question in the Drow's eyes. This had the potential to be more than a bit amusing if he played things right.

"You want to know why I don't beat you, torture you, rape you, cause you pain for my amusement?" Harry asked.

Min's eyes widened in shock.

"You're an open book to me, you have no secrets from me," Harry explained. "Disappointing since your people were supposed to be masters of deception, but not unexpected based on the other members of your race I've dealt with." A simple people with simple, if sadistic, motivations.

"Why don't you?" the girl growled.

In response, Harry reached forward and grabbed a handful of hair from the back of the Drow's head. Using it as a handle, he pulled her close and forced her to look him in the eye. His other hand rose to brush against her bosom, palming the bodice dagger she'd concealed.

"Yes, I knew about this too," he said, holding up the dagger. "Would you use it to chip stone?"

"No," she replied sullenly.

"Of course not, it would ruin the blade, make it worthless for its intended purpose." Which was probably to be stuck in his kidney at some point if she got her way. "That's what you are to me, a potentially useful tool." He shook his head. "No, better to say that I believe you have the potential to become a useful tool. At the moment, you're not even that."

He released the girl and dropped the dagger.

"What am I?" she asked, confused by how things had gone.



"A source of amusement." Harry turned so she wouldn't see his smile. "One that's barely worth more than the ingredients she'd render into. Think hard on ways you can be useful to me or resign yourself to the fact that I will find a use for you if you don't." He strode out of the tent. Drow, know what strings to pull and you could play them like a harp.

Typos fixed by Dark King

Idea suggested by David Ford

Omake: Siege

Several eyes followed the new man as he walked through the camp to the captain's tent. Raven black hair with a few stray bits of grey at the temples, a strong jaw, and bedecked in enough magical items to imply that he was either rich enough to purchase them all or dangerous enough to acquire them by other means.

More eyes lingered in the lithe female form of the robed figure following in the mage's wake. A few plans were made to either distract the wizard or otherwise take advantage of his absence for a bit of time with the man's shadow. Those plans would later be ruthlessly discarded by horrified men once they'd learned the nature of the woman, but that wasn't important . . . at least not yet.

Harry came to a stop and gave the sentries in front of the tent a flat look. "Announce me!" he ordered.

"Wizard to see you, captain," one of the men called out.

"Kinda stupid looking," the other volunteered. "Doesn't look likeroak . . . croak."

The remaining guard stared at the frog like creature that had taken the place of his companion for a moment in stupefied shock before making a wild grab for his sword. Another gesture made him a perfect match for the first creature and Harry strode into the tent, unhindered.

"I didn't say you could come in," the captain said calmly. The man was an apparent human of advanced years sitting on a folding chair.

"And I'm not sure I want to take a job from someone with such ill trained sentries outside his tent," Harry replied. "My fee has just tripled."

"What makes you think that I'm going to hire you after what you did to my men?" the captain demanded.

"That was my fee for undoing what I just did," Harry replied. "Six hundred gold to have the pair of them returned to normal." Harry popped his neck. "I wouldn't advise it, personally, between the lot of them they can't be worth more than a dozen coppers."

"True," the captain admitted. "But the stupid looking one is my sister's eldest son and the really stupid looking one is my wife's nephew."

"Put them in front of your tent where you could keep an eye on them and where they couldn't get into any trouble?"

"Yes," the captain admitted. "Who are you and how did you hear that I was hiring?"

"One of you recruiters met me in an inn about two days down the road, gave me twenty gold to agree to an interview with you."

"Who?"

"Don't recall his name; Dwarf, carried a double axe, red beard, big nose, scar across the bridge of the aforementioned big nose."

"That skinflint offered you twenty of my gold?"

"Just to meet with you," Harry agreed.

"Why?" the captain demanded.

"Min."

"Master?" The cloak formed stepped out of the shadows to hover attentively by Harry's shoulder.

"Lower your hood," Harry ordered. "Give him a good look at your face."

"Yes, master," the cloaked woman agreed.

The captain's eyes bulged in shock at what he saw. It wasn't possible, it couldn't be possible.

"Souvenir from my time in the pits," Harry explained.

"How long were you down there?" the captain choked.

"Long enough. Put your hood back up, Min."

"As you wish, master."

"I didn't think it was possible to enslave one of them," the captain admitted.

"It's easy." The whole race was nothing but slaves after all. "You just have to convince them that you have more power than they ever will, that you can crush any of their attempts to escape or assassinate you, and that you laugh at their pathetic efforts." Harry slapped the elf on the rump. "To them, the weak are the natural prey of the strong. She's weaker than I am."

"What happens when someone stronger comes along?" the captain asked.

"Care to try your luck?"

"No, we're getting sidetracked," the captain said quickly. He wanted no part in fighting a man that kept one of them so close. It was rather like shoving a badger down one's pants, sure it might warm you up, might also cause parts near and dear to every man to be bitten off. "I need a magic user to negate the one in the town I'm laying siege to."

"Who is it?"

"Agorin One Eye," the captain replied solemnly.

"Him?" Harry burst into laughter. "You're worried about him?"

"His library is said to be unrivaled in size," the captain cautioned.

"In that case, I want first right of refusal to anything that comes from his, or any other magi user's house," Harry replied.

"His power is said to be . . ."

"Pathetic," Harry interrupted.

"How do you know?"

"We went to the academy together," Harry said with a wide grin. "Granted he graduated and I didn't, I also spent the last several years adventuring while he's grown fat and happy in his father's town."

"You dropped out?"

"On the day he got his handy new name," Harry agreed. "I've heard he swore vengeance against me for what I did to him, I think it's time we saw if he were a man of his word. Ten thousand gold for his death along with first refusal of any magic."

"You've got to be joking," the other man sputtered. "I can get twenty mages for half as much. Still, you did come all the way here . . . I suppose I could offer you, four plus first refusal of any books."

"Now who's joking?"

Omake: Taking the field

Harry smiled as the pimply faced apprentice approached the enemy lines. Time to see if his old classmate had grown some sense in the years since they'd seen each other.

"What do you want?!" one of the men standing on the doomed city's walls demanded.

"I'm here to deliver a challenge to your mage, Agorin one eye!" the apprentice bellowed, trying not to shake. He'd signed onto the army to help around camp and do other strictly non-combatant roles. Delivering a challenge to one of the most powerful mages in the country was not what he had in mind.

"Terms?" a distinguished looking one eyed man demanded.

"To the death between the armies," the apprentice replied.

"Who is my opponent?" the one eyed man asked. "You?"

"Not me," the apprentice said quickly. "I'm not even a combat mage."

"Who, then?"

"The newest mage in camp, I don't know his name but the rumor is that he was hired to deal with you," the apprentice babbled. "He told me . . . he told me to give you a message."

"Let's have it," the more powerful mage growled.

"He said . . . he said that he was willing to give you ten minutes to run back to your house before he killed you. He said he wanted you to seal your library off to protect it from flame and looting until he had a chance to loot and then burn it himself." The apprentice was trembling.

"Was that all?"

"He said some rather unkind things about any possible daughters you might have, sir. He then said that he found it unlikely that you would be able to find a woman to willingly copulate with you and that it was likely their mother was a . . . was a . . ."

"Yes?" the mage growled.

"Was either a poxy whore or a particularly slow farm animal," the trembling apprentice blurted.

"Tell him that I accept his terms and that I shall enjoy forcing him to eat his own spleen!" the mage thundered.

Harry waited until his old school chum had taken the field and was far enough out to have difficulty reaching the safety of the walls. It was time to have a little reunion.

"Who is it that dares face the might of Agorin one eye? Who is the dead man who was fool enough to challenge me?" Agorin bellowed. With luck, killing whatever third rate mage the invaders had found to stand with them would demoralize them enough to leave. A feral grin lit his face as he thought of what he could do to a demoralized army in retreat, the example he could make of them.

"That would be me!" a hooded figure replied. The figure left the enemy lines and came to a stop about thirty yards away.

"What do you want on your tombstone, deadman?" Agorin demanded.

"Is that anyway to treat an old school chum?" the figure asked, lowering his hood.

"You!" A spike of fear pierced his heart when he saw the face of his opponent.

"Been a long time since the academy," Harry greeted his old classmate. "I'm told you made a promise about what you were going to do the next time you saw me?"

"They said you were dead," Agorin replied dumbly. He'd believed it too, what was the chances of someone returning from an extended stay in the underdark?

"I got better," Harry said dryly. "Have we had enough banter or do you want to waste more of my time?"

"I think we've had enough," Agorin spat. The rumors of the man's stay in the pits must be exaggerated. There was no way the idiot in front of him could replicate his feat, no way he could face the might of a wizard with the best library within two hundred leagues. "I promised the Headmaster's widow that I'd see you end."

"More banter?" Harry sighed. "How long must I wait for you to get this out of your system?" He scratched his chin. "I'd suggest postponing this for a week if not for my fear that you'd try to escape."

"Are you calling me a coward?!" Agorin screamed. "Fire . . ." a look of confusion appeared on his face as he toppled over. "H . . . how?"

"I've learned quite a few tricks over the years," Harry replied, watching the other man die. The victorious wizard looked at the city walls. "Does anyone else want to try their luck?!"

AN: On the fence about turning this into a full fic, got quite a few projects going at the moment. May keep it on the back burner, may bin it. Who knows.

Beta by: dogbertcarroll

More polish applied by: dark\_king98

Disclaimer: Dedicated to Robbins of Dudley and to all the men who carried their fine products over the top.

## Part 02 of 'Halloween Echoes' Odd Ideas #132

### The Plot Thickens

Harry returned to his room and packed his new things, with the exception of the weapons, into his trunk. Taking the cane, he willed the blade to appear and took several practice swings to get a better idea of the weight. Pity they hadn't had a useable axe, but his host had been more than competent with a sword. Well, compared to the majority of people in his time and place anyway.

"What would he have thought if I told him that he was probably had more experience than ninety percent of the public?" Harry mused. Probably cheered till he realized how unimpressive the statement was, the importance of having the ability to use a sword in combat had dwindled almost to nothingness in both of their worlds. It was only the soldiers in the secret war that kept it up, Harry couldn't say if that was due to greater utility or the fact that the 'generals' were a bunch of bloody fossils.

He wasn't too deep in his routine when Ron swaggered in and plopped himself onto the bed.

"How much did you lose?" Harry asked, breathing hard.

"Nothing," Ron said smugly.

"Hmwa?"

"It's all a matter of timing," Ron explained. "You saw what she did when we were playing snooker, she sucked us in by losing a bit and then made a big bet, right?"

"Yeah?"



"So what I did was quit while I was ahead," Ron said smugly. "I've now got a bit of flexibility with my OWLs, have to have an EE average."

"Sorry I doubted you, I thought you were trying to win everything back," Harry admitted.

"Win it all back?" Ron snorted. "I'm not that thick, mate, poker's all about math too. Hermione'd ha' eaten me alive."

"Speaking of Hermione, where is she?"

"In the library researching something," Ron replied. "Where do you think she is?" The boy gave a meaningful look at the blade in his best friend's hand.

"Got it in Diagon," Harry explained. "Only bought it because it was one of the few things in the store that wasn't junk."

"If you don't want it, why are you practicing with it?" Ron asked.

"I didn't say that I didn't want it, Ron. I said I only bought it because it wasn't junk. If they'd have had a better selection, I'd have grabbed something else." Harry glanced down at the blade. "For starters, there's no guard or basket to protect my hand. Better hope I don't get into a fight with someone else with a blade, eh? For another thing, it's short. What this is, is a gentleman's accessory to be whipped out as a threat in a bad situation. It's not meant for a real fight."

"So you're gonna use it as back up?"

"In the very rare circumstances when I can both carry it without making a spectacle of myself and when I can't carry other things," Harry agreed. The push daggers and the horseman's pick though, they sounded promising.

The Horseman's pick resembled nothing more than a large steel rock hammer. It was about a meter long with a steel handle and a steel ball at the bottom to counterbalance the large head.

"Wizard," Ron said, eyes gleaming. "You gonna use that one, Harry?"

"Maybe," Harry replied, attention caught by the punch daggers. "Much more likely to use these."

Both made by Robbins of Dudley during the first world war, they featured aluminum handles and wickedly sharp dagger like blades, the similarity ended there. The first punch knife looked fairly standard, a flat pointed blade with a skull shaped knuckleduster handle. The second was odd, it had a large cylindrical fist like grip with a horizontal blade protruding from the space between where one would have their index and middle fingers. They both also carried the tell tale tingle of magic items when Harry handled them, making a mental note to have Bill look them over, Harry slipped them into a pocket.

"You've got to show me how to use those things sometime, mate," Ron said enthusiastically.

"Sure, Ron," Harry agreed.

"Came up here to tell you that I'm off," Ron continued, giving a last lingering look at the weapons on the bed. "Be back after lunch tomorrow."

"See you then, Ron."

"Later, Harry."

Harry followed his friend into the hall, from there they went their separate ways; Ron down the stairs to take the floo and Harry down the hall to the Black family library to find his other best friend.

"Found some things that you might be interested in, Harry," Hermione announced, attention still fixed on her book.

"How'd you know it was me?" Harry asked, flopping into his chair.

"You're carrying so many knives that you're starting to clank," Hermione replied. "Either hide them better or put a silencing charm on them or something."

"I will, thanks." He glanced at the girl, he really did need to find something for her to carry. Ron was easy, just find something that looked dangerous and the boy would cheerfully tote it everywhere, Hermione on the other hand.

"What?" the girl demanded. "Why are you staring at me?"

"Trying to figure out a way to get you to start carrying a knife around," Harry admitted.

"Get me one and teach me to use it," Hermione said, turning her attention back to her book.

"Really?" he asked, somewhat incredulously.

"Yes," she said firmly, a bit of testiness coloring her voice.

"Huh, I thought it'd be harder than this," Harry admitted. He pulled out the punch knife with the skull shaped knuckleduster grip. "Why don't you take this one till I can source another?" he suggested.

"No," Hermione said, dismissing the knife with a glance.

"What?"

"One, you need to teach me how to use it first. Two, it has a skull. Find one that looks nicer for me," Hermione demanded.

"Looks nicer?"

"Yes," she agreed.

"This is a very good design," Harry protested.

"Are there other good designs that are also aesthetically pleasing?" Hermione demanded.

"Yes," he admitted.

"Get me one of them," she ordered.

"But . . ."

"Have you forgotten that I'm a girl, Harry Potter?" Hermione growled.

"No, but I'd thought you'd be practical enough to put function over form, Hermione Granger," he stated, trying not to grin.

"You've admitted that there are other functioning designs that have more pleasing forms," Hermione sniffed. "Function first, form second. That has function first and ugly second. I refuse to carry it."

"Are you willing to learn with it?" Harry asked, sighing.

"Of course," she agreed. She carefully marked her place and closed the book. "Why are you carrying around so many weapons, anyway?"

"I'm carrying my billhook, because I might need it. I'm carrying the ice pick because I want to enchant it, don't see it being in regular carry after that," Harry began.

"Why not?" the girl asked.

"What?"

"If you're going to take the time to enchant it, why aren't you going to carry it?"

"Because it's not much good in a fight," Harry explained. "Best thing to do with it is shove it into someone's ear, kinda hard to do that in a fight."

"I guess," she agreed. "What about the other stuff?"

"The punch knives I might add to my regular arsenal, probably will come to think of it. Wand or billhook in the right and one of them in the left could be a pretty good combination," he finished thoughtfully. "Reason I'm carrying them now, is because they feel enchanted and I want Bill to have a look the next time he's around."

"Let me see," the girl demanded. Harry pulled out the two knives and laid them on the table.

"Why didn't you tell me you had something acceptable?" Hermione demanded, dismissing the knuckleduster knife and focusing on the other.

"What?"

"How do you use it?" Hermione asked, picking up the knife with the odd cylindrical handle and horizontal blade.

"You grip it and punch with it, horizontal lets it go between ribs easier," Harry replied.

"It's a bit big for me," Hermione said, following his instructions to get the correct hold.

"I'll get you one made to your size," Harry agreed. "They're pretty easy to use, just need to learn how to punch."

"I can do that already," Hermione said, dismissing his concerns. "Get me one of these and show me how to carry it and I will."

"Punching isn't as simple as just making a fist," Harry sighed.

"I know, my father taught me. He likes to box and he also likes the thought of his daughter being able to look after herself," Hermione explained. "You didn't wonder how I was able to punch Malfoy in the face without injuring my hand?"

"Most of my knowledge on punching was from the other side until recently," Harry said dryly.

"Do you want me to go beat up Dudley for you?" she offered, half seriously. "I can't imagine he'd like the thought of getting stomped by a girl."

"No thank you," Harry replied. Not that he didn't appreciate her offer and not that he doubted she'd win, fat bastard would tire pretty quickly and be meat for anyone with even a modest fitness level.

"You don't think I'd win?" she challenged, getting her back up.

"Quite the contrary, I'm fairly sure you would," Harry assured the girl.

"Why'd you say no so fast?"

"Because if you did fight him, he might get in a lucky shot," Harry explained.

"So?"

"So if he did, I'd have to kill him," Harry said simply. "Something I'd like to avoid doing to blood relatives."

"Statements like that are exactly why you'll never fit into wizarding society, Harry," Hermione sniffed.

"Because I think girls are to be protected?"

"No, that makes you a gentleman," she said. "It's that you don't want to kill blood relatives, but you wouldn't sleep with them either."

"No." He shuddered, sick at the thought of doing anything remotely intimate with any of the Dursleys, even so much as a hug...

"There you go, if you were a proper pureblood you'd think that a quick murder or two would get you some gold and that the family trees had as few branches as possible," Hermione giggled.

"The Weasleys . . ."

"Are considered blood traitors so they don't count. I'd bet Draco has a plan or two in his ferretty little mind on how to best get rid of daddy to gain control of the Malfoy gold with the added benefit of making his mother single."

"If it's all the same to you, I'd rather not speculate on how Malfoy's mind works," Harry requested.

"Alright, Harry," Hermione agreed. "Is there anything in particular you'd like to focus on?"

"Ways to disrupt magic," Harry said.

"Silk is a good insulator and Cold Iron is supposed to be good at absorbing magic," Hermione said thoughtfully.

"Something we could use to bring down wards?"

"You'd probably need a whole lot of it and you'd need a way to keep it from absorbing magic till you needed it," Hermione replied. "Wrapping it in silk might work, but that would still mean a lot of silk."

"Any way to de-magic it after it absorbs magic?" Harry asked.

Hermione gave a helpless shrug. "I read a book that made a passing mention of it a few years ago. I'm sorry, Harry, but I have no idea."

"You had enough of one to give us a lead," Harry replied, grinning wide. "Good job, Herms."

"Harry, if you ever use a diminutive like 'Herms' again, I'm going to be forced to take your billhook and do something quite unpleasant to you that will adversely effect your chances of ever becoming a daddy."

"I'm sorry, Hermione, that was quite improper of me, it will never happen again," he promised quickly.

"Thank you, Harry," she said, her good cheer returning. "Let's check to see if we can find another reference."

"You know, I think you might be spending too much time around me," Harry said thoughtfully as they walked towards the stacks.

They got in a couple hours of rather promising research. The net result was that Harry was confident that, providing they set some

plans into motion, he'd be able to escape from the chain restraints the Ministry used to hold prisoners in court.

They literally ran into Bill on their way down to get something to eat that evening.

"My fault," Bill said, cutting Harry off. "I wasn't paying any attention and I was going too fast down these narrow hallways."

"Alright." Harry shrugged it off. "Glad to see you, had a couple things I was hoping you'd be willing to look at."

"Sure," Bill agreed.

Harry pulled the push knife and the punch knife out of his pocket and handed them to the cursebreaker.

"They've both got an odd set of charms on them," Bill said, turning the punch knife over in his hands. "Silencing charms, notice me not charms, concealment charms, and ever sharp charms to start with. If they're blooded or the user wills it, they imbue the user with a terrifying aura that should only affect enemies. Whoever made these was both very good and very strange. You need to channel a little magic to them to activate. I suggest pretending they're a wand and trying to cast a simple spell until you get used to the feeling and can do it at will. It should stop you clanking when you walk at any rate."

"Thanks, bill," Harry said, taking the knives back.

"Ministry might consider these dark objects, Harry," Bill cautioned.

"Are you going to tell them?"

"Of course not," Bill replied quickly.

"Neither am I," Harry said with a grin.

"Just don't get caught," Bill advised.

"I won't," Harry agreed.



They found Tonks in the kitchen rapidly switching her gaze from a cook book to a bubbling pot on the stove.

"What are we having, Tonks?" Harry asked.

"Soup," the woman replied.

"What kind?" Hermione prompted.

"I'm not sure," Tonks admitted. "I think I might have switched recipes half way through."

"Having trouble sleeping?" Harry asked sympathetically.

"We're back in the kitchen, I try to stun the last death eater and my wand doesn't work. He stuns you and my wand still doesn't work, so he pulls the knife out of his friend and stabs you with it, I try to stop him but I can't. Then he turns and starts walking towards me." Tonks shuddered. "That's usually when I wake up, but sometimes he gets close enough that I can feel his breath on my face."

"Want to know how to make those dreams disappear?" Harry asked.

"I'll try anything," Tonks agreed. "Madame Pomfrey won't let me have anymore dreamless sleep."

"Training," Harry said. "Your mind doesn't think you're ready and it's trying to give you a hint."

"Really?"

"Hell if I know, but it worked for me," Harry said cheerfully. Well, more correctly, it had worked for his host.

"Alright," Tonks agreed.

"How much experience do you have at close quarters combat?" Harry asked.

"They covered it for about half a day at the academy," Tonks replied.

"None at all, means you don't have to unlearn any bad habits," Harry continued cheerfully. "Think you can get us a few things?"

"What do you need?" Tonks replied.

"A heavy bag and a few more of these," Harry replied, pulling the knife Hermione had favored out of his pocket and putting it on the table. "Any that, that sorry excuse for a weapon shop can dredge up and see if you can source somewhere we can get them custom made."

"Alright," Tonks agreed.

"We'll have you clanking like Harry when you walk in no time," Hermione assured the older girl.

"That's just temporary," Harry said quickly.

"Whatever you say, Harry," Hermione giggled.

"Hey, Tonks, did you ever hear the story about the witch that forgot to wear panties on the day she had a lesson on how to ride a broom?" Harry asked.

"Tell that story and die, Harry Potter," Hermione growled.

"No, but I'm guessing it had a happy ending for one of the boys," Tonks shot back.

"Only one that noticed," Harry agreed. "That or the only one willing to let her know that she was putting on a show."

"For your information, I did not forget to wear panties. I spilled something on my lap during potions and I didn't have any clean underthings and I forgot that there was a flying lesson. I was sticking close to the ground when Harry decided to practice some stupid Quidditch move. Okay?!"

"You do know that you two are now married in the eyes of the wizarding world, don't you?" Tonks asked seriously.

"What?!" Hermione squeaked.

"You didn't know?" Tonks' eyebrows raised. "If a wizard sees a witch in . . . uh . . . that way, she's ruined for marriage unless he takes responsibility for his actions. I kinda just assumed that Harry was a good enough friend."

"Harry, did you know about this?" Hermione turned to see her friend turning red from suppressed laughter. "You bastard!"

"She's the one who said it and you're the one who believed it!" Harry laughed, tears streaming down his face.

"Thought it might be time to get some of my own back," Tonks sighed. "I was going after Harry."

"I can't believe you believed that, Hermione," Harry wheezed. Fending off the girl's attempts to smack him. "That's Order level gullibility there."

"Hey!" both girls exclaimed, eyes widening in rage.

"Not my fault it's true," Harry said reasonably, noting the location of the nearest exit.

"For your information, Harry Potter, the wizarding world is so screwed up that I'm prepared to believe almost anything at this point," Hermione lectured.

"Yeah and the Order . . ." Tonks' mouth worked silently. "I got nothing," she confessed. "In our defense, Hermione's right, the magic world is a messed up place. Live in it long enough and everything seems plausible."

"I know," Harry agreed, "one of the things that makes it so fun."

"So what's on the menu for today, Harry?" Hermione asked.

"Same as always," Harry replied.

"Oh . . . I rather thought we'd be researching the law to help with your case," Hermione replied.

"While the Black family library has a very good section on the dark arts, it's section on law is both small and hopelessly outdated," Harry said with a grin. "Not to mention the lawyer I've retained, he'll do it so we don't have to."

"Why don't you hire researchers to do the rest of it for you?" Tonks asked.

"Because the things I'm researching are not the sorts of things I want others to know that I know," Harry answered, eyes going cross eyed. "Did that make as little sense to you as it did to me?"

"I got it," Tonks assured the boy.

They finished their breakfast and went their separate ways; Tonks off to fill Harry's order and Hermione and Harry to the library for another fun filled day of looking at dusty tomes.

Harry sighed as he squinted at the text, vowing to himself that he wasn't going to so much as look at a book for at least a month after they've managed to off the dark bastard and his covey of brain dead minions.

"THOR!" Hermione screamed, a wide grin splitting her face. "Bloody Thor!" The girl leapt to her feet and started dancing a jig.

"Do I need to get Madame Pomfrey?" Harry asked, eyes locked on the girl's bouncing bosom.

"Remember when you asked me about using cold iron to disrupt ward?" Hermione asked, eyes gleaming. Not waiting for the boy to respond, she continued, "I figured out how to do it."

"You're going to summon the god of thunder?"

"No, don't be ridiculous," Hermione sniffed. "All we'd have to do is put multi ton iron rods into orbit, doesn't even matter if we use magic since they'll burn it off when they reenter the atmosphere."

"You want to drop giant iron rods from space onto death eaters?" Harry asked, trying to get a handle on the girl's train of thought.

"It'll work too, no ward will be able to deal with that much iron," Hermione giggled.

"How would we guide them?" Harry asked.

"We'd have to set up an attack pattern while they were in orbit, but that won't pose too many problems," Hermione replied.

"Okay, what about collateral damage and the fact that a multi ton chunk of anything falling out of orbit will destroy just about anything it lands on?"

"Oh." The girl drooped. "Guess we'll have to save it for places like Azkaban."

"We'd have to figure out how to do it first," Harry pointed out, chilled to the bone by the implications of their conversation. "Might also be a good idea to figure out how to prevent anyone else from doing something similar."

"He who controls the orbitals, controls the planet," Hermione agreed.

Harry raised an eyebrow at that statement.

"So I sometimes like to read science fiction to relax," Hermione admitted. "One can not live on research alone."

"Alright," Harry agreed. He was saved from having to think of a better response by the timely arrival of his favorite pink haired Auror.

"Floo for you, Harry," Tonks announced.

"For me?" Harry's brows knit together. "Better see who it is."

"Has to do with the weapons you want," Tonks said helpfully.

Tonks fell into step behind Harry as he walked down the stairs to find an unfamiliar old man peering through the flames into the sitting room.

"Didn't believe it, but you really are Harry Potter, aren't ye?" the old man in the fire said in wonder.

"I am," Harry agreed. "What can I do for you?"

"I'm the owner of the weapon shop you visited and I'm told you want to do a bit of business with me?" the old man said.

"More knives and an option on anything quality," Harry agreed. "Custom orders for smaller hands if possible."

"Should be," the old man agreed. "You know how to use those things?"

"I have an idea," Harry agreed. "Wouldn't turn down a couple pointers if they were offered by someone that had used them in sticky situations."

"That your way of asking if I went over the top in the great war?" the old man asked with a smirk.

"If you like." Harry shrugged.

"Not just no, but hell no, wizards are exempt from National Service in the United Kingdom and the Ministry encourages them not to volunteer unless it'd be more unusual if you didn't and that mostly applies to muggle born nobs of which I am the first but not the second," the old man replied. "Declared me essential and I spent the war building little gems like what you bought from my shop."

"What do you have available at the moment?"

"Couple crates I took with me when the great one ended and a couple more I acquired after the next war ended," the old man replied. "Not sure what condition it's all in, but I packed it well so it should be good."

"What do you want for it?"

"Twenty galleons for the lot, as is. Quite a bit more if you want them enchanted," the old man said.

"How bout I buy them as is and send them back for enchantments as needed?" Harry suggested.

"That'll be fine," the old man agreed.

"I want to look over it all first to confirm that it's usable before buying it," Harry continued.

"That'd also be fine," the old man agreed.

"Could you arrange something, Tonks?" Harry requested.

"Sure, Harry," the Auror agreed.

"I'll just give 'em to your girl then," the old man suggested. "You pay me a five galleon deposit upon receipt and the rest after you've confirmed that the goods are in usable condition."

"Deal," Harry agreed.

"Pleasure doing business with you, young Mister Potter," the old man said as he cut the connection.

"Likewise," Harry agreed.

"I also got the boxing bag you wanted and had it set up in the gymnasium, Harry," Tonks volunteered.

"Thank you, Tonks," Harry said. "You want to get started on it now?"

"If possible," the Auror agreed.

"Let's grab Hermione and switch into something more comfortable, shall we?"

"Wouldn't it be better to practice in what we'll be wearing?" Tonks asked. "We always changed before dueling practice, but the robes I wear on duty are much more confining."

"We'll do that too," Harry agreed. "I'm going to have to insist that we also get you a pair of duty robes tailored to let you be more mobile or charmed to be ripped off."

"I think the charms will have to wait until we get to know each other better," Tonks shot back.

"I'd assumed that you wore something under them." Harry gave the woman a speculative once over. "Finding out I'm wrong has just made me a very happy man."

"Pervert." Tonks swatted him on the arm.

"I'm a teenage boy, was there ever any doubt?"

"No, I guess there wasn't," Tonks said thoughtfully. "Come on, let's get you back to your other girl."

"Noticed that, did you?" Harry asked.

"Hard to miss it, what with the way the old lecher looked at me when he said it," Tonks replied.

"Tell me if he causes you any trouble," Harry ordered, leaving rest of the comment alone.

"I can handle him," Tonks said.

"I didn't ask if you could handle him, I told you to let me know if he causes you any trouble." Harry locked eyes with the woman. "Understood?"



"Yes, sir!" Tonks eyes went blank. "Woah . . . flashback," she whispered to herself.

"What was that last bit?" Harry asked, giving her an odd look.

"Nothing," she murmured. For a second, she'd been back in the academy facing one of the training officers. "What are you researching today?" she prompted, hoping to change the subject.

"The same thing we research every day, Tonks. Ways to take over the world!" He burst into a maniacal laughter.

"No really, what are you researching?"

"Wards at the moment," he sighed, no one ever got his references. "I suspect that Hermione may be researching long distance transportation." Something that had the potential to be very worrying.

"Want a hand after we hit the gym?"

"Sure, more the merrier," Harry agreed. Time to peel another layer off the onion and see how she reacted.

They collected Hermione, changed, and met up in the small gymnasium to start their first workout. The room looked as if it had sprung from the physical culture craze of the late Victorian era. On the walls were hung an assortment of Indian Clubs in a dozen different sizes and weights next to posters on their use. On the floor sat several kettlebells. And hung in the center of the room was a large white canvas heavy bag.

"I say, I don't believe I've had visitors around this portrait for quite some time," a gruff voice said from behind.

Harry spun around, knife appearing in his left hand and wand in his right.

"Decent reflexes," the voice said in a tone of approval. "Could be better, but that's what training is for, 'eh wot?"

Their eyes were drawn to a dusty frame leaning against the wall by the door. In it was a dark haired muscular man with a handle bar mustache dressed in a stereotypical 'strong man' outfit.

"Noticed a bit of movement around this frame and saw that someone had put up a heavy bag, dare I hope that you're planning to study the sweet science?" the portrait asked hopefully.

"Bare knuckle and dirty tricks mostly," Harry replied.

"Ah, but first you must know the gentleman's way of going about it so that you can use it as a list of things to ignore," the portrait said with a grin. "Hang me up. First thing I want you to do is take a jump rope off the hook and get warmed up."

Harry and the girls looked at each other before finally Tonks gave a little shrug and went about fulfilling the painting's request.

"We'll start you out with bare knuckle and then work in a bit of catch wrestling, I think," the painting said thoughtfully. "May also be a worthwhile idea to get you started on how to use a blade, every gentleman should know how to fence."

"Who are you?" Hermione asked.

"Major Dudley Pulleine, late of her majesty's 24th regiment of foot," the portrait replied. "I thought I told you to begin jumping rope," he snapped at Harry.

"Was waiting for the girls to finish hanging you up so they could join me," Harry replied. "Would not have been polite to start without them."

"Of course," Major Pulleine's portrait agreed. "Forgive me, boy, I hadn't realized that they were to join you."

They hung the portrait and Harry spent a very happy few minutes watching Hermione and Tonks jump rope, it was almost hypnotic the

way they bounced. Sometimes, on very rare occasions, it was good to be Harry Potter.

The fact that the girls seemed equally distracted went right by him.

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Harry awoke the next morning to a frantic metamorph shaking him violently enough to make him fearful of whiplash.

"What is it?" he groaned, batting her hands away.

"Your lawyer called, Ministry is pulling a dirty trick and you need to get dressed and to your trial right bloody now!" Tonks replied. She cast a couple charms to get him clean and his clothing changed. "Swallow this," she ordered, pressing a vial of potion into his hand.

"What is it?" Harry asked.

"It'll make you sound more intelligent," Tonks replied. "Ministry has Aurors take it when they're supposed to testify. Gives 'em a bunch of ten galleon words to use rather than the four knut ones we normally get away with."

"Fine." Harry gagged at the taste. "I'm going to expect you to reciprocate when I get back," Harry said as he concealed a couple weapons.

"What?" Tonks asked dumbly.

"You got my clothes off, it's only fair that . . ."

"Shut up and bloody move!" Tonks barked. "You don't have much time."

"Fine," Harry sighed. "Incidentally, assuming they throw the book at me is there anything worse they can do than expel me?"

"Isn't that enough?" Tonks asked.

"No, I rather think it's not," Harry replied.

"They can also fine your guardians a maximum of one hundred galleons," Tonks replied. "Are you finished asking questions or to you want to stop for tea on the way to the floo?"

"I'm finished, thank you, Tonks," Harry said.

"Just bloody go," Tonks begged.

"I will, and don't worry. Even if I am found guilty, I've already got contingency plans." That said, Harry strolled down the stairs and took the floo to the Ministry. He was met by his barrister as soon as he arrived.

"Ministry wants to use veritaserum on you, I was able to get that squashed because of your age but only by suggesting a couple charms that will detect any untruths," the man said quickly. "I'll try to keep you off the stand, don't see the chances of that being better than my chances of suddenly being named true king of England, but one can hope."

"Does it compel truth or does it detect lies?" Harry asked intently.

"The second, why?"

"Just wanted to make sure," Harry said. "When's the trial start?"

"Just a couple minutes, Minister had it rescheduled at the last minute hoping you wouldn't show so they could get a default judgement against you."

"Any way we can screw him for that?"

"If we win."

"Let's get this party started," Harry said.

Harry noted Fudge's look of dismay when he walked into the court, head held high. A smirk appeared on the boy's face, the corrupt bastard might win but Harry was determined to make him work for it.

Harry turned his head and allowed his gaze to sweep over the gallery, it was filled with the press, a smirking Malfoy family, and a worried looking Tonks who had somehow managed to make it there before him. Looked as if Fudge hadn't 'forgotten' to notify everyone about the change of plans.

"Barrister, show your client to his spot," Madame Bones ordered.

An Auror stepped forward. "Case number ten fifteen twenty one, Minister verses Harry James Potter on charges of violating the statute of secrecy and of using magic while underage."

"Does the defendant wish to enter a plea at this time?" Amelia asked.

"Not guilty on both counts," Harry's lawyer replied.

"Noted," Amelia said. "I declare that this court be in session." The woman struck her gavel, invoking the ancient magic of the meeting hall.

Harry tried to remain calm as the chains wrapped around him. He did not like being confined, a sentiment the fragment his host had left behind agreed with completely.

"Objection!" Harry's barrister yelled. "Those chains are to be used only when the safety of the court is at stake. Are you suggesting that my client, a mere schoolboy, is a sufficient threat to warrant them? Further more, are you suggesting that the crimes he's accused of are serious enough to merit such inhumane treatment?"

"Sustained," Madame Bones ruled. "Get them off him."

"I'm afraid that their magic keeps them on until after the trial has completed and this honored body had reached a verdict," Fudge said with a slimy smile. "An error made by the last group I had conduct maintenance on the charms. Too bad."

"So you agree that I should have them off, but it's only a quirk of magic that's keeping them on?" Harry asked.

"Yes," Fudge agreed. "Shame, but that's how things work sometimes."

Doing his best to conceal the motion from any onlookers, Harry opened the silk pouch in his pocket and dumped the iron filings it held onto the chains. The iron absorbed enough magic to cause the enchantments on the chains to momentarily fail, at which time Harry stepped out of them, collectively shocking every witch and wizard in the room.

"Bailiff, place him under arrest!" Fudge bellowed immediately, his desire to destroy the boy overcoming his stupefaction.

"On what charge?" a clearly annoyed Madame Bones demanded, motioning for her underlings to stand down.

"Attempted escape," Fudge replied.

"You yourself agreed that he was being held illegally," Madame Bones intoned. "Someone get him a chair."

"Objection!" Fudge squealed.

"Overruled!" Amelia barked back.

It was a few minutes before a couple Aurors wheeled in a comfortable looking office chair. Minutes Fudge wasted on glaring at Madame Bones and Harry spent watching the crowd. It seemed as if his little display had paid off, judging by the look of shocked awe on the part of several reporters and the lack of smug on the Malfoys. Time to see if the gold he'd given his lawyer had been well spent.

"The court understands that your client has agreed to have a charm cast to help ascertain the truth of his words," Amelia spoke. "Is that true?"

"It is, Madame Bones," Harry's lawyer agreed.

"Bailiff, cast the spell," Amelia ordered.

Without a word, the bailiff stepped forward and cast a very complicated charm if his wand movements were anything to judge by.

"Please state your full name for the record," Madame Bones asked.

"As far as I know, it is Harry James Potter," he replied.

"As far as you know?" Amelia repeated.

"I've never seen any birth records so I can't be sure," Harry explained.

"Noted," Amelia said. "What house were you sorted into? Please reply with a falsehood."

"Hufflepuff," Harry replied.

"Let the record state that the charms have detected a lie," Amelia ordered. "In your own words, please tell us what spells you cast on the night in question and why."

"I cast no spells," Harry replied.

"Objection!" Fudge bellowed. "Ministry detectors clearly show the presence of magic at his home of record. Let the record state that the defendant lives in a muggle neighborhood."

"Minister, do you wish to take up the role of chief prosecutor?" Amelia asked, clearly annoyed.

"I believe that I would better serve the court by sitting on the panel at this time," Fudge replied quickly.

"Then I suggest you keep your mouth shut and let the prosecution do what they are paid to do," Amelia said sharply.

"Of course, Amelia," Fudge replied, teeth grinding together.

"Objection!" a fat toad like woman called out.

"Sit down!" Amelia barked. "Mr. Potter, do you wish to address the Minister's question?"

Harry glanced at his lawyer who gave a sharp nod. "There was magic cast at my former residence, but not by me."

"Please tell us, in your own words, what happened, Mr. Potter," Amelia asked.

"I was asleep and a pretty witch came into my room and woke me up," Harry grinned. "She told me that the wards were coming down and that the people bringing them down did not have my best interests at heart."

"She used those exact words?" Amelia asked.

"No, she did not," Harry replied. "But the meaning was the same if my memory is correct."

"Noted, please continue, Mr. Potter."

"She told me that we had to get out and then that the nasty fellows outside had cut off our escape route," Harry replied. "They got the wards down and between the two of us, we were able to stop them."

"Stop them how?" Amelia asked.

"I'd prefer not to say," Harry replied.

"Madame Bones, might I ask the court to clarify something for my client?" Harry's lawyer asked.

"You may," Amelia agreed.



"According to custom and tradition, anyone violating the sanctity of a wizard's wards is presumed to be hostile to the point that deadly force is approved."

"It is," Amelia agreed. "The court would go so far as to say that the use of deadly force against those breaking the wards on an inhabited dwelling is considered a public good. No charges would be pressed and a commendation from the Department of Magical Law Enforcement is usually given in cases in which the residents survived and the assailants did not." Amelia turned back to Harry. "That point clarified, do you wish to reconsider your refusal to answer my last question?"

"I do, Madame Bones," Harry agreed after another nod from his lawyer.

"How did you stop them?" Amelia asked again.

"Fatally, Madame Bones," Harry replied.

"What happened after that?"

"We left my former home and went somewhere else," Harry answered. "I've been there since."

"Where did you go?"

"As far as I know, security measures around the place make me unable to tell the location to anyone that does not possess the secret, Madame Bones," Harry said respectfully. Open court was not the best place to test his theory about his otherworldly knowledge letting him circumvent the charm.

"Who did you see use magic?" Amelia asked.

"The mystery Auror," Harry replied. "I'm guessing the bad guys used magic too, but I don't remember seeing them do it."

"Noted," Amelia said. "Does the prosecution wish to ask any questions at this time?"

"We do, Madame Bones," Umbridge agreed.

"Proceed," Amelia ordered.

"Do you know the name of this so called mystery witch?" Umbridge sneered.

"I don't believe we've been formally introduced so I can honestly state that I don't." Not for sure anyway, he had no idea of what her middle name was.

"You can't tell us anything about her?" Deloris asked and then continued on before he could respond. "How do we know that she isn't just some product of your demonstrably fertile imagination?"

"She told me that she was an Auror," he volunteered.

"And you believed her?" Deloris' voice was filled with disgust and disbelief.

"Seemed plausible, what with the people in masks outside bringing down my wards," Harry agreed.

"Yet the Department of Magical Law Enforcement has no record of sending one of their own to your residence," Umbridge said with a grin, clearly believing that she'd scored a point.

"So I thought they were more competent than the rest of the Ministry seems to be," Harry replied with a shrug. "Sorry to say that if you're right, I was wrong and you represent the average level of competence I can expect."

"Why I've never . . ."

"Maybe you should try it?" Harry suggested, eyebrows wagging.

"I motion that the accused be reprimanded for lack of respect and further motion that he be held in contempt!" Delores barked.

"Approved!" Fudge shouted, gleefully.

"Denied!" Madame Bones shouted. "And the Minister will refrain from speaking for the rest of my trial, is that understood?"

Fudge turned beet red, enraged almost beyond reason at being publicly undercut by one of his underlings. Retaining just enough sense to raise the privacy charms, he turned to the Director of Magical Law Enforcement with fire in his eyes.

"Yes, Minister?" Amelia prompted.

"Do you really want to fight me on this, Amelia?" Fudge hissed.

"I rather think that I have enough backers not to worry too much about Lucius Malfoy's empty suit," she replied. Dumbledore was going to owe her one and she'd see to it that the public remembered her as the one lone voice of reason that refused to go along with the corrupt Minister's plans to railroad an innocent boy.

"I can make life very uncomfortable for you, Amelia," Fudge threatened.

"Try me," she challenged. It also helped that she had more than enough evidence to bounce the man out of office and into a cell the second she decided to. She was waiting till the right moment to be used to the greatest possible effect, Minister Bones had a rather nice ring to it in her opinion.

"You've made a dangerous enemy today, Amelia," Fudge promised.

Madame Bones surreptitiously checked to make sure that the charms were taking down a transcript to send to the archives.

"My job is to stand between civil society and the forces of barbarism. There is nothing civil about your attempts to drive a national hero from our world out of fear that the public loves him more than they ever will you." She resisted the urge to smirk, the public would eat that up. "The weak often seek to destroy what they cannot control."

She cut the privacy charms, hoping that he'd lost enough self control to throw a temper tantrum in front of everyone.

To her intense disappointment, he had not.

With a sigh, Madame Bones let her gaze return to the boy. "Let the records show that at no time did the charms register a falsehood from the defendant. Does the defense wish to question the accused?"

"The defense would like to ask a few questions in the interests of getting the whole story, Madame Bones," Harry's lawyer agreed.

"Proceed," Amelia ordered.

"Mr. Potter, do you believe that the individuals that attacked you intended to do you harm?"

"The first one told me to prepare to die when they kicked the door down," Harry replied. "So, yes."

"Madame Bones, please have the record show that my client would have been permitted to use magic under the circumstances no matter where he was," Harry's lawyer requested. "The fact that he was in his known place of residence only strengthens his case."

"Of course," Amelia agreed.

"Thank you, Madame Bones." The lawyer turned back to Harry. "Do you know or suspect why they intended to do you harm, Mr. Potter?"

"I presume that they were death eaters," Harry replied.

"Objection!" Fudge screamed.

"Bailiff, remove the Minister from my court," Amelia ordered, exerting every ounce of will to keep the smile off her face.

"Yes, Madame Bones," the Bailiff agreed, stunning the man and dragging him out of the room.

"Objection, you can't do that!" Umbridge said, shocked to the bone by what had happened.

"The law disagrees," Amelia said dryly. "Was there anything else?"

"The Ministry objects to the defendant's characterization of his assailants as 'death eaters' as they were all rounded up and incarcerated at the end of the last war," Umbridge said quickly, hoping to salvage the situation.

"Mr. Potter, why do you think they were death eaters?" Madame Bones asked.

"They were dressed like death eaters and I saw Voldemort get his body back a few months ago," Harry replied.

The courtroom erupted, every witch and wizard seemed to be competing over who could be the loudest.

"ORDER! I will have order in my court!" Amelia bellowed, banging her gavel.

The commotion died down and Harry's lawyer went for the kill. "Madame Bones, do the charms show any hint of a falsehood?"

"They do not," Amelia said, feeling sick. "Let the record show, that the defendant was telling the truth."

In light of Harry's testimony and without Fudge on the panel of judges, acquittal was a foregone conclusion.

Harry was met by two Aurors when he walked out of the court the one on the right looked like a troll had bred into his family line in the not too distant past, which contrasted with his shorter partner who appeared to be part goblin. On the plus side, neither one looked hostile. On the minus, they wanted something.

"Madame Bones would like a few moments of your time, Mr. Potter," the left Auror said smoothly.

"It shouldn't take long," the one on the right offered. "Bout the same amount of time it will take your lawyer to sign these papers for us out here."

"I'd better see what she wants," Harry agreed.

"Your wand, Mr. Potter?" the left Auror asked, holding out his hand.

"Is in my lawyer's attache case," Harry replied. "I turned it over to his custody before the trial and have not retrieved it yet."

"Go ahead," the Auror agreed, pointing to a side door. "She's right through there."

Harry stepped through the door and into a richly furnished room. Madame Bones was already sitting behind a desk and he walked across a thick plush carpet to get to what he presumed was to be his chair.

"Thank you for agreeing to meet with me, Mr. Potter," Amelia began.

"How could I refuse such a kind invitation?" Harry replied, taking a seat. "What can I do for you, Madame Bones?"

"I wanted to discuss the fact that you hid the name of the Auror that saved you from the court," Amelia explained. "Why?"

"I thought Madame Umbridge established that the mystery witch was not in fact an Auror?" Harry replied calmly.

"We both know that Auror Tonks was the one to come to your aid, why didn't you identify her?" Amelia asked, leaning forward to fix the boy with a glare.

"She saved my life, Madame Bones. What was I supposed to do?" Harry asked.

Amelia stared at the boy for several moments and was privately pleased that he had enough courage to keep eye contact. Perhaps

she should encourage Susan's little crush? It was something to consider anyway.

"Be that as it may, Auror Tonks violated procedure by failing to file an incident report," Amelia said calmly.

"She saved my life," Harry said firmly. "Do you know what that means to me, Madame Bones? It means that I will do anything to protect her from retaliation, failing that I will do anything to avenge her."

"Is that a threat?" Amelia growled, swelling up to loom over the boy.

"A promise, Madame Bones," Harry replied.

"Good." A smile appeared on the woman's face. "The records will state that the Department received intelligence that an attempt was to be made on your life, an undercover Auror was immediately dispatched while an assault team was formed."

"And it's lucky that the Department was so quick," Harry agreed. "Shame about the assault team, but I understand how they might have been held up."

"Tell me, Mr. Potter, have you considered giving your endorsement to any candidate in the event that the Minister suddenly finds himself out of a job?" And into a cell.

"It would have to be someone capable of fighting a war against the a large group of dangerous undesirables," Harry said, looking into the woman's eyes. "One that was willing to do what needed to be done, no matter how horrible it might seem."

"You're offering it to me?" Amelia asked in shock.

"Wasn't that what you were asking?"

"I was hoping that you would agree to stay out of it," Amelia admitted. "Dumbledore will not be pleased to have you back me."

"Why not?"

"We've had several loud and public arguments," Amelia replied. "I do not approve of his hiring practices. Specifically his practice of hiring criminals and dark creatures to teach school children."

"To be fair, Hagrid is innocent and Lupin was one of the better teachers we had in Defense," Harry replied.

"Snape?" she prompted.

"Should not be permitted anywhere near children," Harry said firmly.

"I'd have been shocked to hear otherwise," Amelia laughed.

"One isn't often kindly disposed towards the man responsible for the near extermination of their family," Harry agreed coldly. "He's going to die, and I'm going to be there."

Amelia had to restrain herself from taking a step back, the certainty in his voice shocked her to the bone. It was like hearing her partner in the old days talking about another unofficial raid, it was horrifying to hear coming from a schoolboy.

"Meaning what, Mr. Potter?" she asked through suddenly dry lips.

"Meaning I hope to see him tried, convicted, and sentenced to death of course," Harry replied. "What did you think I meant, Madame Bones?"

"Nothing, Mr. Potter," she said quickly, hiding the fact that the feedback from the lie detecting spell, which was still in effect between the two, had hit hard enough to feel like a bludger. The woman dropped her plans to encourage her niece's crush, better to have the girl with someone like the last Longbottom. Boring, but safe.

"To continue our discussion," Harry spoke. "I don't see any problems with giving you my public endorsement in the unlikely event of our esteemed Minister having to step down early. I would like to speak with you about a few things, but at this time, there are very few things that would cause me to withdraw it or to back someone else."



"We'll talk," Amelia agreed. "Do you have any objections to Auror Tonks acting as a go between?"

"None at all, Madame Bones."

"I'll have her meet with you to discuss the details then," Amelia said, wanting to get away from the suddenly dangerous individual in front of her. "She'll be in touch."

"Good day, Madame Bones," Harry said, ending the conversation.

AN: I like my fics to be like a slinky going down steps, this is more like a drunk falling, or being thrown, down a flight of stairs.

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Typos by Jenifer Winterbine, Sheya

meteoricshipyards

"Harry! Drop that knife and back away!"

"What? Why, Bill?"

"I'm detecting demonic magic from it."

"Really? I just got this from the Prada store."

Disclaimer: Prisecolinensinenciousol

Pipe

"Hey, boss." Tonks nervously stuck her head into the Director's office.  
"Got a minute?"

"Auror Tonks," Amelia said with a shark edged grin. "What a surprise to see you outside the property room. I could have sworn that I told you not to come out until the whole thing was cataloged unless you wanted to be crucified by the coffee machine as a warning to all about what happens when someone annoys me."

"You did, Boss," Tonks agreed. "I found something important."

"You'd better hope so," Amelia agreed flatly. "What is it?"

"I found the contents of James Potter's pockets," Tonks said quickly.  
"Coroner sent it to the property room after the autopsy."

"And you think that Harry would like to have them," Amelia sighed.

"Yes, boss," Tonks agreed. "Little guy always seems so happy when his parents are mentioned."

"You have the box with you?"

"Right here, boss." Tonks held up a standard cardboard evidence box.

"Put it on my desk and go back to the property room," Amelia ordered.  
"Forget the punishment and make sure nothing of Lily's is stuck in purgatory."

"Yes, boss. Thank you, boss." Tonks screwed up her courage. "About getting everything to Harry . . ."

"I'll take care of it myself," Amelia replied. "It's the least I can do for my partner's kid." Amelia glanced at the clock on the wall. "In fact, why don't we do that right now?"

"Just let me grab my coat, boss," Tonks agreed cheerfully.

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Harry was in Transfigurations when the seventh year female Prefect arrived to escort him to a private meeting.

"Head of Magical Law Enforcement," the Prefect told him. "Demand Professor McGonagall be present as your Head of House if they ask you anything," she advised. "And no matter what be polite."

"Okay," Harry agreed.

"Call her Madame Bones, don't call her Ms. Bones or anything else, Madame. And, um . . ." she racked her mind trying to remember the etiquette lessons her parents had drilled into her head. "I think a bow would be too old fashion, just remember to be polite and to ask for Professor McGonagall if they start asking questions. Okay, Harry?"

"Okay," the boy agreed. "Thanks."

They came to an unmarked door in one of the less used halls which the Prefect rapped on three times.

The door was opened by a smiling Tonks who ushered Harry in and dismissed the Prefect.

"You wanted to see me, Madame Bones?" Harry asked wearily. Previous experience had taught him that just because someone hadn't tried to screw him over in the past, that didn't necessarily mean that they wouldn't make the attempt at some future date and that was leaving aside the level of trust he normally reserved for Ministry officials.

"I believe you know Auror Tonks?" Amelia asked.

"We've met," Harry agreed.

"I had her going through our property room and she came across some things that belonged to your father," Amelia explained. "We thought you'd like to have them.

"Yes," Harry said softly. "I would like that very much."

Amelia reached into the box and pulled out the inventory list. "Let's see. One three bladed pocket knife with ebony scales." She pulled it out and placed it on the table in front of Harry. "One chrome plated brass ball pen, three keys, one key chain, one silver money clip, five twenty pound notes, ten ten pound notes, twenty five pound notes, and one hundred one pound notes, along with five pounds in assorted change." Amelia looked up upon hearing Harry's gasp. "Is that a lot of money?"

"Four hundred pounds is enough to . . ." Harry looked lost for a moment, he had very little idea of what five hundred pounds would purchase. "A lot."

"It's part of the standard kit for survival in the muggle world," Amelia explained. "Along with an identification card, a map, and a phrase book. More extensive kits have more items, more basic have less."

"Oh." Harry's head was spinning at all the new information. "What else is in there?"

Amelia looked down at the list. "One picture of Lily Potter holding an infant, one leather pouch containing tobacco, one lighter, one pocket watch with chain, two handkerchiefs, one pipe tamp, one pocket comb, and one metal stemmed pipe with briar bowl." Amelia stopped and smiled. "That I can safely say is enchanted up the wazoo, one of your mother's projects."

"Why don't I give you a bit of time to yourself to go over all this?" Amelia suggested softly.

"Thank you for all this, Madame Bones," Harry said emotionally. "It means a lot to me."

"You're my partner's kid," Amelia said calmly. "It's the least I can do."

"You were dad's partner?" Harry asked curiously.

"I was Lily's," Amelia laughed. "What gave you the idea that James was an Auror?"

"He wasn't?" Harry asked in shock. He'd always just sort of assumed.

"He worked at St. Mungos reversing accidental transfigurations," Amelia said kindly. "Lily was the Auror, a good one too."

"Could you . . . Could you tell me about her?" Harry asked shyly.

"I'd love to," Amelia agreed.

Amelia spent the next hour sharing story after story about her old partner.

"And then," Amelia giggled. "Lily looks at me, blood dripping down her face, and asks." Amelia giggled again. "He didn't smear my makeup did he? I've got a date with James later and I want to look my best."

Harry laughed in appreciation, the grin on the boy's face looked as if it would need to be removed surgically.

Amelia checked her watch. "Hate to cut this short, but it's lunch time. What's say you eat and I get in a quick visit with my niece? We can continue this after we're done, work for you?"

"Works for me, Madame Bones," Harry agreed.

"Amelia," she corrected. "Or I guess you could use your mother's old nickname for me."

"What was that?"

"Sadistic Bitch," Amelia replied. "Sometimes she substituted 'Evil' for 'Sadistic' and other times she'd call me Melia, but only when things really sucked."

"I . . ."

"Come on." Amelia waved for the boy to fall into step with her. "It's been a couple years, but I think I still remember the way to the Great Hall."

The second they arrived, a familiar red-head jumped out of her seat at the Hufflepuff table and began running towards them.

The second they arrived, a familiar redhead jumped out of her seat at the Hufflepuff table. "Aunty Amelia!" Susan squealed. The girl ran completely across the Great Hall and wrapped her arms around the woman's waist.

"Susan," Amelia said fondly. "How's my favorite niece?"

"There's something I need to tell you, Aunty Amelia," Susan whispered.

"You don't mind if I have a bit of time with my niece, do you, Dolores?" Amelia asked sweetly.

"Not at all," the master of Hogwarts replied reluctantly. While sure of her position over the brats, Umbridge was not so sure about her chances against the Director of Magical Law Enforcement. "Take your time." She shot a glare at the brat in the other woman's arms.

"Stay with Mr. Potter, Auror Tonks," Amelia ordered.

"I'll keep a close eye on him, boss," Tonks agreed.

Amelia allowed her niece to take her to an unused classroom and then watched in pride as the girl cast several dozen detection charms followed by a dozen privacy charms.

"Aunt Amelia, I-"

"Wait!" she silenced the girl. "I know more spells than you do." She turned back to her niece after making her own check and raising her own wards. "What is it?"

"There are some bad things going on in this school, Aunty Amelia," Susan said nervously. "Really bad things."

"Like what?"

"Like Umbridge is torturing Harry and some of the other students," Susan said quickly.

"How?" Amelia asked, turning from concerned aunt to veteran Auror in an instant.

"She has a quill that cuts the back of your hand when you write with it and she uses it to force students to write in their own blood," Susan replied.

"You've seen proof of this?" Amelia demanded. "This is very important, Susan."

"I've seen the scars on the back of Harry's hand," Susan said.

"What else?" Amelia felt faint.

"I think she's also going through the mail and she's letting Malfoy and his goons run wild," Susan continued. "The quill was the main thing."

"Using the quill on children is enough to get her several decades in Azkaban," Amelia assured the girl.

"So you're going to stop her?"

"I'm going to have a hard time keeping myself from stomping her into a paste the moment I see her again," Amelia assured the girl. "Come on, let's get back and handle things."

"Okay, Aunt Amelia." Susan beamed up at the woman, knowing that everything was going to be alright from that moment on.

Amelia stepped out of the room and was immediately struck with the sense that something had gone very wrong as the school's wards seemed to vibrate with tension even she could feel.

"Stay behind me, Susan," Amelia ordered harshly.

"Yes, Aunt Amelia," the girl agreed, sensing the seriousness of the situation.

It had been years since she'd had to get her hands dirty, but one never forgets how to clear a building. The woman made her way to the Great Hall and into a scene of horror. Her Auror was facing the Minister's pet, blood dripping down her face, wand in her left hand as her right arm hung uselessly by her side. And in the toad's arms, wand at his throat was the savior of the wizarding world, Harry Potter, which kept everyone at bay.

"You harm so much as a hair on his head and I promise I'll dedicate the rest of my life to ending yours!" Tonks growled.

"Drop the wand and step away from the boy, Delores," Madame Bones commanded, announcing herself.

The toad like woman's grip tightened as she began whispering her next spell, "Av . . ."

Harry drove his elbow back into his captor's ribs and was rewarded by a gasp that interrupted her incantation. In a flash, he'd twisted out of Umbridge's grip and threw himself to the ground as the air above him glowed with spell fire.

"Clear!" Amelia called out, seeing no further hostels.

"Clear!" Tonks replied, signaling none in her sight as well.

"You okay, Harry?" Amelia asked.



"I think so," the boy replied.

"Good, don't move," she ordered. "Tonks, get Harry out of there. I'll cover you."

"You got it, Chief," the metamorph agreed. The woman took a step forward and kept going, hitting the floor with a sickening thud. A look of confusion adorned the woman's face as she tried to work out just why her legs had failed.

"Damn it!" Amelia cursed herself for not taking her Auror's injuries into account. It seemed she'd been behind a desk too long. "Minerva, see to your student. Poppy, see to my Auror. Filius, call my office and tell them I want Flint to bring ten here right bloody now!"

She watched as the Professors shook off their stupor and began to carry out their assigned duties.

"What a bloody mess," she cursed. Wand out, she approached the fallen form of Hogwarts' Headmistress. Looked as if the woman would make it if she were given prompt medical attention, pity the school nurse was busy with one of her Aurors. "Damn it," Amelia sighed, wand twitching as she cast every medical charm she knew in an attempt to save the odious toad's life. Sometimes, she really hated being one of the good guys.

Testament to the increased training budget Amelia had pushed through the assembly, the duty team arrived less than five minutes after the call had been received.

"Flint, to me!" Amelia ordered sharply.

"Yes, boss?" a svelte woman with dark hair and pale skin reported.

"Stabilize the toad and keep her under wraps, seal the scene till forensics gets here, and get statements from everyone in the castle," Amelia said. "Need I mention the political implications of grabbing the Minister's pet toad?"

"Reliable people only," Flint said. "Fudge's pets aren't permitted anywhere near this or anything connected to it."

"I don't care if you have to put the bloody Minister in chains, you will not permit this case to be compromised. Do we understand each other, Auror Flint?"

"Clear as crystal, boss," the woman agreed.

"Good, move!" Amelia sought out and found the boy. "Harry!"

"Yes, Madame Bones?"

"What did I tell you to call me?" she demanded.

"Amelia." Harry blushed.

"Good, we're going to go some place quiet with Professor McGonagall and I'm going to need you to tell me everything that happened and everything that led to this point. Okay?"

"Okay, Amelia," Harry agreed.

"Minerva!" Amelia barked.

"With you in a second, Amelia," the old woman replied, giving a few last minute instructions to her prefects. "Alright."

"I need a place we can have a quiet talk," Amelia told the Head of Gryffindor House.

"There's an empty office just down the hall," Minerva said after a moment of thought. "Come with me."

Amelia waited until they'd entered the classroom and the privacy charms were up to begin the interview. The boy across from her seemed too calm considering what had just happened. Making a mental note to investigate that later, she began the interview, "Interview number five seven four two, Harry James Potter to Amelia Bones, also present is Minerva McGonagall. Test test test." She

checked her recorder and found it to be in working order. "Would you both please state your names and occupations for the record."

"Harry Potter, Hogwarts Student."

"Minerva McGonagall; transfiguration professor, Head of Gryffindor House, and deputy Headmistress."

"May I see the back of your hand, Harry," Amelia requested. She clenched her jaw when she saw the scars. "Let the record show that the words 'I must not tell lies' are scarred deeply into the flesh of the right hand. Harry, please tell me, in your own words, how you got those scars."

"Madame Umbridge would call us into her office for detentions and force us to use a quill to do lines in our own blood," Harry said.

"Harry, please don't take this question the wrong way. I'm not trying to blame you for anything, I just want to understand what happened and why, alright?"

"Okay," Harry agreed.

"Why didn't you tell anyone what was happening?" Amelia asked gently.

"I tried, but Professor McGonagall just told me to keep my head down," Harry admitted.

Amelia's eyes flicked to the rapidly paling woman in question. "Do you have anything you'd like to add, Minerva?" she asked flatly.

The Head of Gryffindor house looked as if she were about to vomit. "I never thought . . . I . . . Albus said that . . ."

"Why don't you wait outside, Minerva," Madame Bones commanded.

"Is there another adult you'd like to have here to look after your interests, Harry?"

"Could . . . Could Tonks do it?" Harry asked softly. "I know you can't because you're the one asking the questions, but I don't know anyone else I can trust."

Amelia squeezed the boy's shoulder. "Just keep it together for a bit longer, Harry."

The head of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement got up and walked to the door, intent on asking Minerva to fetch her injured Auror from the hospital wing. What she found when she opened it did not fill her with joy.

"What are you doing here, Auror Tonks?" she asked in a deceptively calm voice.

"Making sure no one disturbs your interview, boss," the Auror replied innocently. "The others are too busy with the crime scene and the other interviews."

"And why, pray tell, are you out of the Hospital wing?"

"Just a bit of blood loss, boss, a couple potions and I'm feeling just fine," the Auror explained, getting a hint that she may have done something to displease her superior.

"How's your arm?" Amelia ground her teeth. "Bloody . . . Just get in here and have a seat."

"Yes, boss!" Tonks agreed, limping into the room.

"Well?" Amelia demanded.

"Madame Pomfrey said that the damage isn't so bad, would have been fine if I hadn't nicked my artery."

"Tonks got hurt pushing me out of the way of that spell," Harry said softly. "She saved my life."

"And the commendation I'm going to write will reflect her selfless courage and quick thinking. The private talking to I'm going to give

will reflect my annoyance at the fact that she sprung out of bed while still injured," Amelia told the boy. "Alright with you, Mr. Potter?"

"Yes, Mada- Amelia," he quickly amended when she gave him a sharp look.

"Good." Amelia gave the boy a sharp nod before turning back to her Auror. "Auror Tonks, I've asked you here to represent Harry Potter's interests during the interview. For the next few minutes, you have no higher responsibility than his welfare. If at any time you think that I am going too far, you will do anything necessary to stop me. Is that understood?"

"Yes, Madame Bones."

"I mean it," Amelia warned. "If I think you weren't diligent in your duty to your charge, I will be most displeased with you, Auror Tonks. At the moment, I am slightly annoyed at you for escaping the Hospital wing. You do not wish to see me most displeased, do you, Auror Tonks?"

"I'm not sure I could beat you at my best, boss, know I can't beat you now. But I promise to mess you up enough that Harry can escape or take you himself if it comes to it," Tonks said solemnly.

"Good!" Amelia barked, hiding a satisfied grin. "Now, Mr. Potter, you were telling me about the blood quill," she prompted.

"Objection!" Tonks growled. "He's been through a lot today." She placed a protective arm around the boy's shoulders. "I won't have you badgering him and adding to the stress he's already experienced."

Amelia blinked once . . . twice . . . three times and a smile bloomed on her face. "Would you like a bit of time alone to discuss the matter?"

"Yes, thank you, boss," Tonks agreed.

Amelia stepped out of the room and spent five minutes staring at the sick looking McGonagall before the door opened again to show Harry Potter's smiling face.

"Can I come back?" Amelia asked.

"I told Tonks I didn't mind answering any questions you want to ask," Harry agreed. "I had to promise to go out for ice cream with her after though."

"I see."

"You're invited," Harry added. "And um . . ."

"Yes?" Amelia prompted.

Harry leaned in to whisper, "You have to promise not to let Tonks near Umbridge's cell."

"I promise," Amelia agreed, having a good idea what was behind the request. "Why?"

"I told her some of what happened and . . . she's not happy about it at all," Harry admitted.

"Neither am I," Amelia said tightly. "Shall we continue?"

Amelia walked in and regained her former seat.

"Harry made me promise not to get up till the end of the meeting or till we had a break," Tonks said, hoping to explain why she hadn't opened the door herself.

"Good," Amelia said, smiling at the boy. "I hope that's not all you made her promise to do."

"She has to go back to Madame Pomfrey to get checked out," Harry said. "But I have to go with her so Madame Pomfrey can check me and each of us has to do everything she wants us to do."

"After I take him out for ice cream," Tonks added. "And he's also going to wear my old vest from now on."

"Your old vest?" Amelia asked.

"I was thinking of getting a new one anyway, Madame Bones," Tonks said, refusing to meet the woman's eye.

"I have to wonder how an Auror in your pay grade can afford to buy two in the same year, Auror Tonks," Amelia said flatly.

"I've almost paid off the first one, boss," Tonks said defensively.

"I'm not going to wear it if it's that expensive," Harry said, "you need it more than I do."

"We had a deal," Tonks pointed out.

"The deal was-"

"Enough," Amelia said calmly, causing both to fall silent. "Auror Tonks, you will not be giving up your new vest to Harry. Harry, you will be going with Auror Tonks to get one fitted to yourself at Ministry expense. Are both of you satisfied?"

"How come the Ministry will pay for me but not for Tonks?" Harry asked.

"Don't push your luck, Harry," Amelia said. The boy just narrowed his eyes. "Fine," Amelia sighed. "Auror Tonks is to be reimbursed for the cost of her vest by the Ministry. Happy?"

"Yes, Madame Bones," Harry agreed.

AN: Wasn't doing anything else with this, figured I'd slap some paint on it and send it out into the world. People like to have James Potter as an Auror, I do it myself on a number of occasions, just thought I'd do something different here.

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Typos by: laros\_deejay, Tommy King

Omake: Job Description

"What do you think Aurors do?" Amelia asked simply.

"They catch dark wizards," Harry answered.

"And?"

"Isn't that all?" Harry asked.

"It's a very small part of the job," Amelia replied. "Aurors are problem solvers. If you have a problem, any problem, you call the Aurors and they do their best to sort it out for you. For example, despite the easy availability of wards to keep homes safe from fire, one of the most common calls we get is to put out a fire in someone's kitchen."

The woman's face hardened.

"Aurors do a lot of things, hit wizards are the ones you call in when you want to break things." A cold smile appeared on Amelia's face. "I very much want to break things right now."



Disclaimer: Nitrogen Narcosis is a danger one must be aware of is one is to enjoy the fine sport of SCUBA Diving.

## Rapture of the Deep

Harry had a look of doubt on his face as he looked down at the odd contraption Hermione had cobbled together for him to use in the second task of the Triwizard tournament.

"It's just like SCUBA diving," Hermione explained helpfully. "You'll have a couple hours of compressed air and then you'll need to come up." She pulled out a burlap sack. "You can also use it to fill these. Tie one around whatever is taken, fill it with air, and it'll shoot to the surface. Charm I put on them will make them float your item to the beach after that. All you'll need to do is go down, attach the bag, and come up," the girl finished proudly.

"That's great, Hermione," Harry cheered. "Do you think you could make a few extra bags for me?"

"No problem, Harry," the girl agreed. She of all people knew the importance of always having a spare, that's why she always made two copies of every essay in case something happened to the first.

IIIIIIII

Harry hadn't been down long before he found a figure on the bottom of the lake. Figured that Dumbledore would have known about his stupid crush. It didn't take long to release the witch and send her to the surface. Deciding to take one more look around, he froze. Hermione was there too, that actually made a lot more sense. Hermione had been the only one who'd supported him after his name came out of the bloody cup, Cho must have been Cedric's hostage. Resolving to apologize to the other boy later, Harry set about freeing the second hostage.

For some reason, the longer he stayed down, the harder it became to form a rational thought. Due to that and his cold numbed fingers, it had taken forever to tie the cord around Hermione and fill the bag, ages longer than it had when he'd tried it the first time. Then he

noticed Ron. Maybe they hadn't been able to decide which of them he'd miss the most and taken both of them? Seemed plausible.

Harry was running low on air by the time Ron rocketed to the surface. He was just about to go up when it hit him. Fleur's hostage was still there. A quick look around confirmed that the French champion was nowhere in sight. If he stayed much longer, he wouldn't have enough air to get back. If he filed another lift bag, he definitely wouldn't have enough time to get back. Harry began paddling towards the little girl, his life for hers. It wasn't a hard choice to make. How could he leave a little girl on the bottom of the lake and still look himself in the mirror? Better a short but proud life than a long one filled with shame anyway.

The mermen kept their distance, having learned not to interfere with the strange boy's quest to rescue all the hostages after their first attempt. They might have been able to stop him, but certainly not without someone on one or both sides taking irreparable damage.

The edges of Harry's vision were turning black as he watched the little girl rise to safety. Four hostages saved, four lives for one wasn't such a bad trade. At least this way he didn't have to compete in the bloody tournament anymore.

Moments after the boy stopped moving and a black tar like substance seeped out of his forehead. It went unnoticed by the mermen who'd rushed to his side and doing everything they could to save his life. Their role in the second stage of the tournament was two fold; the first was to guard the hostages, the second to ensure the safety of the competitors.

The crowd had cheered when the first hostage appeared on the surface and again when the second had appeared. They'd fallen into a confused muttering when the third and then fourth had arrived in the same manner as the first two. The return of three champions and the conspicuous absence of the fourth had driven the point home to even the dullest wizard, something had gone terribly wrong.

Silently, every witch and wizard in the crowd stared at the lake, willing the youngest champion to surface, hoping with every fiber of their being that they hadn't become unwitting witnesses to a tragedy.

The lake began to boil and as one, they all took a sharp breath, hoping beyond everything that it heralded the last champion's triumphant return to the surface. Sadly, it was not to be. The last champion had returned, but it was on a litter carried by a dozen murmen.

Their leader spoke something to a suddenly pale Dumbledore before handing over the still form of the youngest champion.

Hermione, who had been watching through the open door of the medical tent burst into tears at the sight, her sobs announcing her shattered heart to the world. Her best friend was dead and it was all her fault.

|||||

Harry awoke with a start. His head felt as if it were going to split apart and every joint in his body felt as if they were rusty hinges in need of an oil. The world was a melting pot of color, every blotch blending into the next. So this is death, the boy thought to himself. Funny, he hadn't thought it would hurt so much.

"Awake, Mr. Potter?" the amused voice of his Headmaster asked.

"Unfortunately, sir," Harry agreed. He sent his hands out in search of his glasses.

"Poppy tells me you have a slight case of the bends, which is apparently a sickness caused by your rapid ascent to the surface. It's nothing she can't repair, of course, but I'm afraid you won't be able to leave that bed until she does."

"Did she tell you how long, sir?" Harry asked.

"I shouldn't think that it would be more than a few weeks," Dumbledore replied. "You are about to knock over a potion vial, something I wouldn't advise as the only replacement in the castle is rather foul tasting."

"Do you know where my glasses are, sir?" Harry asked, his hands returning to his side.

"Alas, no. It is believed that they were snatched up by some eager souvenir hunter, I'm afraid that all eyes were on your performance, including those that had been assigned to act as security. The Ministry has generously agreed to have a new pair constructed for you at their expense by way of apology."

"Please thank them for me, sir." Harry licked his lips. "And please convey my apologies to Cedric."

"For rescuing Ms. Chang?" Dumbledore asked dryly.

"Yeah, Harry agreed. I came across her first and I thought you'd found out about my stupid crush." The boy blushed. "She was already going up when I realized my mistake."

"I'll be sure to pass that along to them at the next Prefect meeting," Dumbledore promised. "One mystery solved, would you be so kind as to help me solve another?"

"Of course, sir," Harry agreed.

"Why did you rescue Mr. Krum's hostage?"

"The little girl? I thought she was Fleur's," Harry replied. "I couldn't just leave her down there."

"I'm speaking of Ms. Granger, Harry," Dumbledore prompted gently.

"But she was my hostage," Harry protested. "Hermione and Ron are the things I'd miss most in the world, I couldn't live without them."

"Of course you couldn't," Dumbledore laughed, "do you mind if I pass that along, Harry?"

"Not at all, sir," Harry replied.

"Get some rest, Harry, Poppy tells me that the best thing you can do to aid your recovery is get as much rest as possible. If you'll take an old man's advice, I'd suggest you listen to her."

"I will, sir," Harry agreed.

He next awoke to the sounds of someone moving around his bed.

"Awake are we?" Pomfrey's voice asked.

"Yes, Madame Pomfrey," Harry agreed.

"Hold still," the woman commanded.

Harry felt a pair of glasses slide over his face.

"It will take some time for your eyes to get used to them," Poppy stated. "Tell me if you are having trouble after two days, alright."

"Yes, Madame Pomfrey." Harry marveled at how clear the world had gotten.

"Do you feel up to a couple of guests?" Poppy asked.

"Yes, Madame Pomfrey," Harry agreed, eagerly.

"Drink the two potions on the bedside table and I'll allow them in," she said.

Harry downed both potions before the woman had finished speaking, prompting the now smirking woman to open the door with a flick of her wand.

"Cedric, Cho," Harry exclaimed in shock.

"Afraid I'm abusing my status as a Prefect to get us in here ahead of your friends," Cedric explained. "We just wanted to thank you for recusing Cho."

"But . . . I . . ."

"Dumbledore told us why you did it and I don't care," Cho interrupted. "Madame Pomfrey says that I had an odd reaction to the potion they used to put us out, if I'd stayed down much longer I'd have been in a bed next to yours. Thank you, Harry." She leaned down to kiss him on the forehead. "You saved me."

"I owe you one," Cedric said seriously. "Thank you, Harry."

"No problem," Harry replied, blushing a deep red at the kiss.

Hermione pushed her way in the instant the two Prefects opened the door to go out. "Harry!" she sobbed. The girl threw herself into his arms, staining his shoulder with her tears.

"What's wrong, Hermione?"

"I'm so sorry, I should have figured out a way to let you store more air."

"It's alright, it's my fault for staying so long," he assured the girl.

She lifted her head up just long enough to give him a tender kiss on the cheek. "I promise I'll do better next time, Harry, I promise!"

"It's alright, no one could-" he was interrupted by the pitter patter of little feet across the floor of the hospital wing.

"Arrie, my savior," a familiar little girl squealed before jumping on his bed and claiming his other arm. "Veux-tu devenir mon chéri?" she asked, kissing him on the cheek.

"Um . . ."

"Arrie!"

Another female sob dragged the boy's attention back to the door just in time to see the entrance of a tearful Fleur.

"You 'ave saved my sister, 'arrie, I am forever in your debt," Fleur announced, rushing across the room to shower his face in kisses.

"Hey, mate!" Ron called out as he walked into the room.

"Ron, if you try to kiss me and I'll punch you in the nose," Harry promised as Fleur gave him another.

"What?" Ron shook his head. "Never mind all that. I came here to warn you that mum is in a right bad mood about you endangering yourself in a stupid contest, then she stops and starts bragging about what a gentleman you are and how of course you saved a bunch of girls. I were you, I'd meet with her when she's in her proud mood."

"Thanks, Ron."

"Now why did you think I wanted to kiss you again?" Ron demanded.

Harry glanced helplessly at the three witches in his arms. "Just the way my day's been going, mate."

"Some folks have all the luck," Ron laughed.

AN: I suppose I could have made it even more overly dramatic. Basic idea, Harry starts narking really hard, gets bent on the way up, etc.

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Typo by ruruwkzu

claimer: Low brow, very low brow.

### Harry's Triwizard

The Head Table was strangely empty when the students trickled in that morning. Every eye turned on Harry Potter when he walked to the Headmaster's seat and produced several fireworks from his wand.

"I'm afraid the organizers of this tournament and most of the staff of the three schools have come down with a nasty case of irritable bowel syndrome," Harry announced. It had been surprisingly easy to get Hermione to brew the potion for him, all he'd had to do was admit why he'd needed it. Dobby hadn't even needed a reason, having friends was great! "So I've decided to take over."

"What gives you the right to take charge?!" Draco squealed. "When my father-"

A quick spell from Harry and the twat was thrown into a wall, followed up by spells from nearly every other student at Hogwarts along with several savage kicks from most of Slytherin put a quick end to that.

"And that's for being an insufferable dunder head!" Pansy growled, planting another boot in the idiot's side. "And that's for being a Malfoy!" Another boot. "And that's for having an inappropriately hot mum!" Nearly everyone lost themselves in a fantasy involving the former Black for a few minutes. "And that's for having an inappropriately hot mum!" If it was worth kicking him for once, it's worth doing it twice, that was her motto. Pansy looked around, making that a couple dozen or till her leg got too tired.

"Any other objections!" Harry asked loudly, there were none. "It's come to my attention that the former organizers were cheating. Well, I won't have that in my tournament which is why no one, not even I will know what the tasks are before they occur."

"Who will?" Cedric asked, more than willing to go with the flow after seeing what happened to Draco.



"The greatest magical artifact ever created will judge the tournament put on by one of his lesser cousins," Harry replied. "I'm talking of course about our own Sorting Hat."

Everyone watched with bated breath as Hermione appeared with the aforementioned Hat.

"Right," the Sorting Hat began. "I've got things to see and people to do, so we're gonna get this done as fast as possible. Any objections?" Wisely, there were none. "Then I pronounce the first task to be a . . . kissing contest!"

"Dibs on Fleur!" Harry said quickly, knowing a golden opportunity when he saw it and grabbing it with both hands.

"Damn you, Harry!" Cedric growled, taking Victor by the hand. "Let's get this over with."

After several minutes of heavy petting, the front runner inspiring several lines of notes from several very interested students, the Hat was ready to give its verdict.

"First place with a perfect ten points is Durmstrang's own, Victor Krum." The boy had proved to be a surprisingly good kisser, having achieved the perfect balance of tongue and groping. "Tying for second place with eight points each are Harry Potter and Fleur Delacour. Finally, with a dismal four points is Cedric Diggory who lost points for using too much tongue." And had only managed to achieve a score as high as he had through an over abundance of enthusiasm thanks to the Hufflepuff work ethic shining through.

The aforementioned Puff was much too busy trying to calm an enraged girlfriend to pay attention to his score. "But, Cho, I had to do it or I'd lose my magic to the cup."

"The Hat said kissing contest, it never said you had to partner up with one of your fellow competitors," the girl shot back, clearly unhappy with how the tournament had gone so far and that she hadn't been part of the first event.

"Right!" the Hat bellowed. "Moving right along, the second task is a . . . pissing contest! Points added for neat writing or difficult and unusual words." The Hat glanced around. "DOBBY!"

"You is calling your hattyness?" the little elf asked.

"Has the snow been applied to the grounds?"

"It has your hattyness," Dobby agreed.

"Then get out there and write me some words!" the Hat ordered.

The visibly relieved competitors returned a few minutes later and, after a quick inspection of their work, the hat was ready to dole out points.

In an impressive display of athleticism, Fleur came in first with 'Eucalyptus', scoring a perfect ten. Harry got second with nine points for the word 'Hat' after explaining that it was a tribute to the wisest and most impressive being he'd ever had the good fortune to encounter and, as a consequence, receiving five extra points for sucking up. Victor got third with five after misspelling his own name. And Cedric came in last, with another four points, having run out of material to work with half way through.

That hat's gaze swept over the room and a hush fell over the students as they waited to hear what the last task would be. "Drinking contest!" the hat declared. "Points awarded for speed, quantity, and choice. Subtracted for vomiting, unless done artistically, passing out, pissing yourself, and choosing poorly."

Harry and Fleur came close to being disqualified as their pace was visibly slowed about half way through the task in favor of giving a repeat performance of the first task. Still, they managed to score an impressive ten and nine points respectively after the Hat determined that their choice of Single Malt Scotch and Armagnac were meant to be savored. Victor lost points due to his choice of a raspberry appletini, easy on the tini giving him a measly two points for the event, and Cedric passed out after drinking a surprising amount of Professor Sprout's Patented Weed Killer. Guaranteed to put hair on your chest

if it doesn't burn through your digestive tract first. Meaning, Harry and Fleur shared the victory with an impressive eighteen points each and the Triwizard tournament was over.

AN: Keep meaning to write a fic in which the only reason Pansy hangs out with Draco is as an excuse to spend time with his mother.

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Typo by aalens2002

Omake by ubereng

"That's bogus!" Ernie Macmillan cried. "None of these contests have been magical!"

"Thank you, boy," the hat replied. "You get to help us with the third and final contest; the 'moaning' contest." At this, several people groaned when they realized that the contests were: "Kissing", "Pissing", and now "Moaning".

Before anyone could object, the hat continued, "For you French bastards, that's 'Moaning', as in 'N'. 'Magic Of A Naughty Nature'. Each of our contestants will magically alter , in a non-permanent way, The best 'upgrade' wins the round."

Krum hits him with a {censored}.

Fleur does {Oh my!}.

Diggory... {That's got to hurt}.

Harry just surrounds Ernie with Ernie clones (optionally, some of them horny). Harry wins but annoys most of the audience.

Disclaimer: Gonna blame Cal for this one.

## A Different Dursley

James became aware that something was bothering Lily shortly after she agreed to become his wife. It took him nearly three days to get to the root of the problem which, to his immense relief, was not because the girl was having second thoughts about becoming his bride.

"I don't know if I want to have a magical wedding," Lily confessed. "If we do, my family won't be able to come. But if we don't, our friends won't be able to."

"Two ceremonies than," James suggested, willing to do anything to get the look of distress off of his future wife's face. "One magical and one muggle. That way your entire family can come."

"You're willing to do that for me?" Lily hiccuped. "I was afraid one wedding would be too much for you to endure."

"Two weddings means two wedding nights," James rejoined. "Besides, I love you, Lils, I can survive two weddings."

"Oh, James," she sighed, leaning into him.

"Three on the other hand . . ." He shuddered.

"James!" she giggled.

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As they prepared for the wedding, James was starting to seriously regret the fact that he'd been so quick to agree to a second wedding. A second wedding meant more preparation, more preparation meant more time in purgatory.

"Are you sure about inviting Vernon's sister?" James asked. "I mean, anything related to that tub of lard . . ."

"Is still family," Lily said firmly. "Understand?"

"I understand," he sighed. "What about . . ." he trailed off as her eyes flashed. "Never mind."

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Marge wasn't sure why she'd agreed to come to her brother's sister in law's wedding, not like she knew either of them, not like she wanted to after listening to Vernon's stories about the odd couple. After presenting her invitation, she found herself sitting next to a bearded savage clad in a wool sweater that no decent person would think was appropriate attire for a wedding.

'Well, nothing to do it but suffer through it and hope he doesn't want to talk,' she told herself, doing her best to keep anyone from noticing how she was looking him over.

"Duncan Wallace," the big man introduced himself in a voice that was as soft and solid as a granite mount. "Bride's cousin."

"Marge Dursley," she said with a blush. "Bride's brother in law's sister." She gave the man a much closer inspection. He was just over six feet tall and barrel chested. His hands were heavily callused from working with ropes and nets while a network of wrinkles emanated from the corner of each eye from squinting into the sun to spot buoys.

A wide smile appeared on his face, letting her know that she'd been caught and he wasn't displeased at all about her interest, causing her blush to deepen.

"Doing anything after the wedding?" he asked casually.

"What did you have in mind?" She shot the big man a matching grin, suddenly glad she'd decided to attend.

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A single tear worked its way down Petunia's cheek as she finished the note that had come with the child the freaks had abandoned on her doorstep, her sister was dead. She blinked a couple times and wiped off her cheeks before picking up the basket and walking into the kitchen where Vernon was having his breakfast.

"What's that?" the big man demanded.

"Lily's brat," Petunia replied, trying to sound uncaring. "They want us to take care of it."

"I won't have it!" Vernon bellowed. "I won't have that thing in my house!"

Petunia waited for the tirade to end and let her husband stew for a few minutes before offering a solution.

"I . . . I was talking to Marge the other day," Petunia said hesitantly. "She said she was thinking about adopting."

"Foist the freak off on my sister?" Vernon blustered.

"Or we could keep it here with Dudley," Petunia said quickly. "I'm sure it won't do our son any harm to grow up with it."

Vernon stared at his wife for a few seconds before nodding his head. "Call Marge, give her the good news."

"Yes, dear," Petunia agreed. The woman was elated to have accomplished her two goals so easily; her nephew was safe and would grow up far away from her nice normal life. The boy would grow up in a loving, if unusual house, she'd owed Lily that much.

|||||||

Duncan knew something was very wrong the minute he saw his wife waiting for him at the end of the pier. Love had made her beautiful in a way no cosmetics or surgery could have matched, even with the weight of sorrow in her eyes. Cutting the engine, he made sure the boat was tied up before leaping to Marge's side.

"Lily's dead," Marge croaked, her face pale. "James too."

"Harry?" the big man asked, feeling sick to his stomach.

"Alive."

"Thank god the little one survived." Duncan pulled the woman close.  
"What happened?"

"I don't know, just that it wasn't an accident," Marge admitted.

"I see." His hands, hands that could crush a brick to dust clenched impotently.

"Petunia and Vernon want us to take him in," she added softly.

"Of course," Duncan agreed instantly. "He's family." Speaking of which, whomever was responsible had better hope to hell he never found them. He was a man of the sea and the sea would hide his secrets or sins if it came to that.

|||||||

Life was happy for Harry, growing up as he did in a little stone cottage perched above the bay. He loved everything, from the warmth of the cast iron stove to the clack of his adopted mother's knitting needles as she made a new Guernsey to keep the chill off of his father, as the man pulled his income from the deep.

Like most boys, Harry idolized his father; believing the man to be an epic hero torn from the pages of a storybook and brought to life through some wondrous mystical event. The happiest day in his young life was the day his father came home, gave a slow nod, and suggested that he might be big enough to start helping out on the family's fishing boat.

Harry woke before the dawn and spent a few minutes shrugging into his outfit. The boy could already hear his father moving about and he knew that the big man would leave him behind if he was even a

second late. The boy loved summers, it was the only time of year he wasn't chained to a desk in the tiny village school, the only time of year he was permitted to do a day's work to learn his future trade. For the first time in Harry's young life, he felt like a man.

On the boat, Harry worked until his arms ached; cutting bait, sorting the catch, and doing everything else that a lad his size was capable of, having to be restrained on several occasions to prevent him from trying to do a great deal more, to the amusement of the small crew.

It was a good day and they were rewarded with a good catch, prompting one of the crew to suggest, to the boy's secret pleasure, that they take Harry on every trip, that the boy was some sort of lucky charm.

Harry's mother was waiting on the dock when they arrived, a pensive look on her face and a yellow envelope clutched in her fist.

"What is it?" Harry's father asked, leaping off the boat to join his wife as soon as it was properly tied up. A spike of fear pierced his heart, remembering days long since past when his wife had waited on the dock, a similar expression on her face.

"This arrived earlier today," Marge said. "It's for Harry."

"Is something wrong?" he asked, his heart beat slowing back to normal.

"They want to take him away for school," Marge said softly. "He'll be away for most of the year if we say yes." Which was her main objection to the whole thing, it had nearly killed her to see her precious baby boy away with the fishing fleet. She couldn't imagine being without him for the majority of the year.

IIIIIIII

Minerva's eyebrows rose when she read the name on the envelope. She'd expected to have to go through a great deal more trouble to get the boy his letter. Leaving the baby on the Dursley doorstep was one of the greater regrets of her life. A hundred times she'd gotten her



things together and set out to rescue the poor child and, to her eternal shame, a hundred times she'd convinced herself that Albus knew best.

"And they say Gryffindors are courageous," she sighed. "Some example I am."

Her letter opener made short work of the flap and her eyes quickly took in the contents of the letter. It was not, as she'd expected a letter of acceptance or even one of rejection. It was better, it was an excuse to finally see for herself the boy's living conditions. It was her duty to greet new muggle born as Deputy Headmaster after all.

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Marge stepped out of the cottage when she saw the old, wood paneled, Morris Traveller pulled to a stop in front of their gate. A nostalgic smile lit the woman's face. She hadn't seen one of the old estate cars for quite some time. It was good to know a few of them were still on the road.

A distinguished looking woman wearing a rather severe skirt stepped out and walked to the front gate. "Am I at the Wallace residence?" she asked.

"Yes," Marge agreed. "May I ask why you've come calling?"

"I recently received a letter filled with questions regarding young Mr. Potter's education prospects, I'm here to answer them. May I come in?"

"Of course," Marge said, remembering her manners. She stepped forward to open the gate. "Please do. May I offer you a cup of tea?"

"Thank you."

"I'm afraid Harry and my husband are out and will be for some time," Marge continued. "I'd have kept Harry here if I'd known you'd be here so soon."

"My fault for being too thoughtless to write first," Minerva assured the woman.

|||||||

Harry noted the strange woman waiting with his mum when his dad eased their boat, UL181 Hitra, with the care of an artist making the last stroke of a masterpiece.

"Mum!" Harry called out. "We got a load of crays!"

"That's wonderful," Marge replied. Catching the ship's rope and tying it to the dock. "This is Professor McGonagall, she's come to talk about Harry's schooling."

It hadn't been difficult to persuade the couple that sending their child to Hogwarts was the best thing for the boy. It was a job she'd been doing for several decades and it was clear that the woman believed every word she was saying and so she was in Diagon Alley escorting the boy to Gringotts to pick up enough gold to pay for his school supplies. Oddly enough, that had been the most difficult part of the conversation. The boy's parents had insisted on covering the charges themselves and it was only after a whispered plea that the Potters be permitted to do something for their child that they'd relented.

"Key," the goblin said blandly, holding out a hand.

"Here you are," Minerva said primly, handing the boy the key and gesturing that he should hand it to the goblin. "Aside from the goblins, never let anyone have it. If willingly given, it would allow anyone to take anything they wished from your vaults. The only one besides you that should ever hold it is your wife after you get married."

"Yes, Professor."

Aside from the usual supplied, Harry insisted on buying a couple of gifts for his parents. For his mother, he bought an enchanted spinning wheel that would turn raw wool into the finest yarn. For his father, he bought a set of oilskins that were charmed to keep the wearer warm and, if necessary, afloat. They were just the sorts of things everyone

pretended not to know muggleborn gave their families. Things that, while not illegal would be frowned upon if the Ministry was forced to take notice.

"Is that everything, Mr. Potter?" Minerva asked as the boy dragged another purchase to the register.

"Just one more thing, Professor," he replied, proudly displaying an odd brass device. "It says it'll predict the weather."

"They're not very accurate," she warned.

"Neither is the wireless," he chirped. "Wrong half the time, but I figger every bit helps, yeah?"

They left the shop and were nearly to the exit of the alley when the boy's attention was drawn to something displayed in one of the windows. She glanced down and saw that the boy was staring intently at a group of miniature figures battling it out in the shop window. Represented were goblins, trolls, a number of wizards, dragons, and at least a dozen more types of creatures.

"See something you like, Mr. Potter?" Minerva asked.

"Could we get a set of these for my cousin Cal?" Harry asked hopefully.

"We could," the old woman agreed. "But I'm afraid they'd have to be a stationary one unless he already knows about magic."

"Okay," the boy agreed.

AN: Just clearing out my hard drive again, the unfinished fic files were getting a bit cluttered with half done ideas.

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Ideas and Scenes by Doghead Thirteen

Polish by: Derek Dees

Omake: Siblings

"What is it?" Poppy asked, looking down at the serious child.

"Could one of your potions help mum and dad give me a brother or a sister?" Harry asked hopefully.

"Possibly," the school nurse allowed.

"What do you want? I'll give you anything I have," the boy offered calmly.

"I . . ." the school healer trailed off when she got a look at the firm determination shining out of the boy's eyes. "I'll just write them a letter, shall I?"

Omake by meteoricshipyards

Harry gazed at the giant squid and thought about how much it would sell for at the market. That Japanese buyer always bought any squid they caught - he'd at least give them something for it.

"I said needle, Mr. Potter. What is that?"

"It's a garfish, Professor. It popped into my mind as I cast the spell."

"Why would a garfish pop into your mind at that time?"

"It's also called a needle fish."

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Scene/Omake by Doghead Thirteen

This would be one very different Marge, and a Harry who won't bat an eyelid at playing Quidditch in strong winds, something like:

"It's going to be a bit of a brute of a match," Oliver warned. "The forecast says wind gusting up to force seven and heavy rain. Taking the Puffs on in this isn't going to be fun."

There was a round of solemn nodding throughout the Gryffindor team, with the exception of their Seeker.

"Force seven?" Harry asked. "That isn't even a proper gale! We get that nearly every week in the winter and it's not enough to stop anyone going to sea, well, unless they've got a really small boat. They won't even stop the ferries for force seven."

"... What?" said Fred.

"Well there's nothing between an t-Eilean Fada and Canada but a few thousand miles of water," Harry told him. "That's quite a lot of fetch, and the more fetch the bigger a wind you'll get. We get force ten gales four or five times a winter, and I've seen it touch force eleven a time or two."

Addition by [laros\\_deejay](#)

"Might I point out to you then, young Mr Potter, that the brooms employed by the players during a Quidditch match are quite a bit smaller than 'a really small boat'. Quidditch isn't cross-continental haulage and these brooms are no skytrains."

Response by [Cal](#)

Harry's tone was that of one addressing a simpleton or very young child as he responded;

"The reason it'll stop a small boat is the sea getting high enough to come over her gunwhales if it hits her broadside," he said, "Not because the wind will blow her over or anything; it'll batter a lorry or a train around, but that's because unlike a boat or someone on a broom those have huge flat sides acting like ginormous sails; once you've taken the water out of the equation, up until around force nine the smaller something is the less the wind will hit it. Force seven doesn't

even make it difficult to walk. Oh sure, gusts will push you around a bit before that, but may I remind you that when you're flying you've got lots of nice empty sky between you and anything a gust could push you into?"

He pointed into the sky, at where gulls were visible spiralling lazily in the crisp, clean pre-gale air;

"See them? They think that the wind is the finest toy in the world; it has to be one Hell of a storm to get the gulls to stay at home."

Further addition by laros\_deejay

"Except of course right below you."

Further response by Cal

"There's just as much of a chance for controlled flight into terrain any time that you're in the air; if you're afraid of -that- you shouldn't be on a broom -anyway-."

Addition by IofTheBunny

The unholy fire lit Oliver's eyes.

"Do you know anyplace near your home where we could train?"

AN: t-Eilean Fada - Scots Gaelic; 'The Long Island'. Refers to the island that makes up Lewis and Harris in the Outer Hebrides; Lewis was grabbed out the bits-of-Scotland as it is one of the most storm-blasted places in Britain due to there being nothing but water from there to the Americas. - Doghead Thirteen

Beta by dogbertcarroll

Disclaimer: Never attribute to malice that which can be adequately explained by stupidity, but don't rule out malice - Heinlein's Razor

Wizards are Stupid

The second he heard about what happened to the Potters, Remus walked into the nearest bar to seek answers in the bottom of a glass. He didn't find them in the first three and was just about to try the fourth when a thought occurred. The Aurors didn't know what the traitor could do.

The werewolf threw a couple coins on the table and hurried to the Ministry to report to the Department of Magical Law Enforcement.

"What's this about?" the desk sergeant asked, eying the man in front of him as he tried to remember a charm that would deal with the smell of stale booze.

"It's about Black!" Remus spat.

"What about him?" the Auror demanded, all traces of his earlier boredom vanishing.

"You know he was the secret keeper, which means he's the bastard that betrayed Lily and James," Remus began.

"And?" the Auror prompted, sensing that there was more to be learned.

"And he's an unregistered animagus," Remus said, relishing the fact that he was giving the traitor a taste of his own medicine.

"What's his form?" the Auror asked with a grin.

"A dog," Remus answered with a grin. "A mangy, ugly, stupid looking dog."

"You've done a great service to your country," the Auror told Remus firmly. And he had, a greater service than he would ever know.

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The Aurors ignored the man laughing maniacally to pounce on their target. No murdering Death Eater traitor would escape from them without paying a hefty bribe and in the case of this bastard, maybe not even then.

"Sirius Black," the lead Auror began, watching in satisfaction as his men snapped handcuffs on the cur. "We're placing you under arrest for the part you played in the murders of Lily and James Potter as well as the attempted Murder of Harry Potter. Anything to say for yourself?"

"Looks to me like the bastard's refusing to change back," one of the other Aurors sneered.

"That's just fine with me, he can just stay like that forever for all I care," the lead Auror growled. "Take him away, boys."

"We've got the memories of everyone around that doesn't register as magic," one of the other men reported.

"Right, good work." Without so much as a glance at the chuckling madman, the Aurors made their leave.

It took another hour for Sirius to stop and realize that he'd been scooped up by the muggle police who were quite understanding about the fact that he'd had a psychotic break after witnessing thirteen people die in a gas explosion. They were a bit less understanding about the fact that he was wearing a dress, but by that point he'd recovered enough to think up a couple plausible lies. It was amazing what people would let slide if you told them you'd lost a bet.

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In Azkaban, the stray explored his new home. Bit chilly, but they gave him a bowl full of rotten fish heads three times a day and there were plenty of blankets to curl up in. Much better than the place he'd come from anyway and it wasn't like his shaggy coat and the blankets didn't let him shrug off the cold.



The dog turned around a dozen times before collapsing into a ball on his new moth eaten pile of rags, life was good.

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Sirius left the police station wearing a new set of clothing and possessed with the nagging suspicion that he was forgetting something.

He decided to resolve things the same way he always did when he couldn't remember something, by going to the nearest pub and drinking till he didn't care.

Several drinks and a night spent behind a dumpster in a urine soaked alley later, Sirius awoke, having regained his missing knowledge.

"Laundry," he groaned. "Forgot to pick up my clothes."

The stares he got when walking into the laundry were a bit off putting. He'd have welcomed them from a tasty young witch, he did not when they came from a man that could be one of Dumbledore's contemporaries.

"What is it?" Sirius demanded.

"S-S-S-Sirius Black?" the wizard stammered. "But you're supposed to be in Azkaban!"

"If Sirius Black is in Azkaban, I must be someone else," Sirius replied reasonably. Years of pranking had taught him that there was a time and place for the truth. That time was never and the place did not exist.

"Ha, guess you're right," the wizard laughed relieved. "You just look so much like him that I- Never mind."

"I'll take it as a compliment," Sirius said with a grin. "I'm told he was quite the handsome devil."

"Not anymore, stupid bugger tried to hide in his animagus form from the Aurors. Lucky thing they got warned about it first, 'eh?"

"That blackguard was an animagus?!" Sirius exclaimed in shock.

"An ugly mangy mutt," the wizard agreed. "They've decided to lock the bugger in Azkaban without a trial till he decides to change back. But- and you're going to love this, they also put him in a cell that won't allow him to transfigure himself back to human. He'll spend the rest of his life as an animal."

"Nothing less than he deserves for what he did," Sirius said grandly. "Um, what did he do?"

"Betrayed the Potters, killed Peter Pettigrew and a street full of muggles."

"How did he betray the Potters?" Sirius asked.

"He was their secret keeper, he's the only one that could have told 'You-Know-Who' where they were."

"I heard that Peter was the secret keeper," Sirius mumbled.

"What sort of idiot would have chosen that weak willed poor excuse for a squib?" the wizard laughed. "Only a complete buffoon would even suggest it."

"In hindsight, I can't argue with that," Sirius sighed. "Back to the matter at hand, I'm here to pick up some clothes I dropped off the other day."

"Name?"

"Siri . . . uh . . ."

"Siriuh?" The wizard repeated. "Doesn't look like I have anything of yours."

"Check under Sirius Black, you confused me for him when I came in, so maybe the same thing happened before."

"Good thinking." The Wizard ducked into the back and returned with a small parcel. "Here it is, and have a good day."

"You too," Sirius replied, pocketing his package. "Left the stove on!" he exclaimed. That's what he was forgetting. He turned the corner and saw what looked like a hundred Aurors going into the building that held his flat. On second thought, he was sure that they'd be responsible enough to make sure the stove was off and that he should be elsewhere, like out of the country elsewhere.

"Nude beaches here I come!" Sirius cheered.

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Bellatrix stared through the bars into the cell that held her cousin, envy filling every fiber of her being as she watched the man who she'd thought a blood traitor. If only she were more flexible.

Upon noticing that he was the center of attention, 'Sirius' stopped licking his genitals to inspect the other prisoners. "Woof," he said in reply before getting back to work.

Bella sighed, at least she had plenty of time to work on her flexibility. It made her even more envious when she saw that the dementors had no effect on her cousin when he was doing that. The sheer brilliance of the man to be able to figure out how to create happy memories while the dementors were removing them made her double her efforts.

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Sirius murmured in contentment as the girl he'd picked up settled into his arms for a bit of post coital cuddling.

"Just me and my godson now," Sirius sighed, "the two of us against the world now that James and Lils are gone, Peter's a traitor, and Remmy would turn me into the cops."

"That's so sad," the girl said, tears in her eyes. "Where's your godson now?"

"He's . . ." Sirius paused, that was a very good question. "Some place safe." One he'd have to look into at his earliest opportunity.

"Is there anything I can do that will make you feel better?" she asked.

"You know that thing you said you would never do when I asked earlier?" he asked hopefully. Harry was probably fine, it couldn't hurt to wait a few hours.

"Well . . . I suppose once won't hurt," she agreed with a wicked grin.

"Of course not," Sirius agreed.

Just one time led to another and another until nearly two weeks had passed and a severely dehydrated Sirius Black bid a fond farewell to his companion as he went off to check on his godson.

It didn't take long to find the lad, hell an emaciated prisoner freshly escaped from Azkaban after spending a decade for a crime he didn't commit could have done it. What he found was an affront to good society and enraged the man almost beyond belief.

Sirius gathered up his godson and shot a look of profound disgust at the Dursley family.

"He's your flesh and blood, your last living relative and you treat him like this?" Sirius growled. "Pray that neither of us darkens your doorstep again, for if we do, you will die!" He slammed the door behind him, leaving a frightened and relieved Dursley family behind.

The door opened a few seconds later to readmit Sirius, prompting Vernon to emit a girlish squeal before the large man passed out.

"He needs to be changed," Sirius explained. "You do that and I'm willing to forget about that promise I made to kill your entire family."

"Give him here," Petunia grumbled. Men were all the same, bloody useless when it came to dealing with children.

"You wouldn't mind if I dropped by every time he needs changing would you?" Sirius asked hopefully. "Just until he learns to change himself or whatever it is that babies do?"

The years passed and Harry had a happy, if unusual childhood raised by Sirius and the endless stream of loose women in a number of exotic, clothing optional locations around the world.

Finally, on the eve of the boy's eleventh birthday, the traditional date of a young wizard's acceptance letter, Sirius took his godson aside for a little talk.

"Is this about sex?" Harry prompted.

"Don't you already know about it?" Sirius asked, shocked by the question.

"Loads," Harry agreed. "But we've never talked about it."

"Ah, no, was planning to have that conversation with you after you were old enough to put it ta use," Sirius replied.

"Oh . . . so . . ."

"Harry, yer mum made me promise to teach you a few things if she didn't make it. To help with that, she drew up a list of rules and forced me to memorize them so I could force you to memorize them," Sirius began.

"You've forgotten them, haven't you?" the child asked, having instinctively known who was going to have to be the responsible one in their relationship from a very young age.

"Most of 'em," Sirius agreed. "But don't worry, most of 'em were stupid like 'don't use wealth and fame ta get inna girl's knickers' and what not. I remembered most of the important ones, well . . . the important parts of the important ones . . . one," he corrected himself.

"But that's also not important. Lily's first rule was that," he cleared his throat, "Wiz . . ." He coughed a couple times and tried again in falsetto, "Wizards are stupid, really really stupid. I mean . . . you're a wizard so I guess you don't understand especially since you've been raised around such stupidity, but . . . I mean . . ."

"That's all?" the young boy asked skeptically.

"That's most of it," Sirius agreed. "Important thing to remember is that wizards are stupid."

"What about witches?"

"Goes without saying." Sirius and the boy stared at each other for a few seconds.

"All of 'em?" the boy asked.

"Most of 'em," Sirius replied.

"What was mum's second rule?" Harry asked.

"Second what now?"

"You've forgotten it!" the boy accused.

"Musta been one o'tha unimportant ones. Something about not belching at the table or not stabbing people or something silly like that." The man flicked his hand. "But that's not important, the important thing is that you'll be going ta Hogwarts soon and so long as you keep in mind that rule, a bit of common sense will let you rule the place and get away with murder, so you'll be fine. Okay?"

"Okay!" Harry agreed, a bit impressed that Sirius had managed to remember even one.

IIIIIIIIII

Meanwhile, in the land of Harry's birth and in a place that was decidedly not clothing optional, the Dursley family huddled together in

a dank shack, hoping, praying, that they'd run far enough and found a hole deep enough to hide from the barrage of letters that had shattered their peaceful existence.

A knock, so powerful as to make the door rattle in its frame let them know that they had not. The first was followed by a second and a third and a fourth until finally, the frame shattered and the remains of the door flew into the room.

"Ah'm here ta give Harry his letter," the giant of a man blocking the doorway announced.

"He's not here!" Vernon wailed. "We haven't seen him for ages." Not since that odd man had stopped dropping by every time the boy had needed his nappies changed.

"Whose dat right 'der then?" the giant demanded, waving a hand at the cowering boy.

"That's my son, Dudley," Vernon replied.

"Yeh lied to the lad about his own name?!" Hagrid was incensed.

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Sirius stared down at the beaches of Rio from their newest hotel room. Truly, he'd finally found paradise. The man let out a low whistle as a particular tasty example of the female form strode by.

"I thought you said my letter was going to come soon," Harry said loudly.

"Meh, probably takes the owl a while to fly this far, don't it? Not to mention the international date line," Sirius said, dismissing the boy's concerns. "We'll look into it in a week or two if yer letter don't arrive by then, okay?"

"Alright," Harry agreed, clearly annoyed by the lack of care the man was showing.

"We know you're magic, we know you were accepted the day you were born, and we know they'll be sending out a letter. Relax," Sirius advised, ripping his gaze away from his target. "Like I said, we'll look into it if it doesn't arrive, okay?"

"Fine," Harry agreed.

"And if all else fails, we can send you to the other place," Sirius finished.

"Does the Brazilian Academy of Tango Dancing teach magic?" Harry demanded.

"No, but it is clothing optional which puts it at least one up on Hogwarts," Sirius shot back. "Maybe even two."

IIIIIIII

Dudley was terrified. First a bunch of letters had arrived and driven them out of their house, then a giant man tore down the door to the shack they'd been hiding in and kidnapped him and dragged him to a horrible place filled with ugly green things.

"Key," the teller demanded.

"Got ii' 'ere somewheres," Hagrid said, searching through his many pockets. "Ere ii'is."

The goblin took the key and examined it, then examined Dudley, causing the boy to shrink into himself. "That is not Harry Potter," the goblin pronounced.

"Not 'arry?" Hagrid demanded. He eyed the fat boy for a moment. "Why of course he is, you tell him, 'arry."

"My name is Dudley Dursley and I just want to go home to my mum and dad!" the fat boy blubbered.

"Dere's gotta be some sort 'ah mistake," Hagrid said in confusion.



"I'm sure there is," the teller agreed. "You know who I usually call to sort out mistakes of this nature?"

"Who?" Hagrid asked, having a feeling that he wasn't going to like the answer.

"GUARDS!"

A dozen unsmiling goblins with sharp spears appeared, points leveled to be in a perfect position to threaten the future of the proud Hagrid name.

The teller waved the sergeant over for a hurried conversation. "Give the small one to the Ministry, move the-object-that-will-not-be-named to one of the super secret, super high security, vaults and detain the large one for questioning."

End result was that Dumbledore had to spend several long hours at Gringotts trying to convince the goblins to release his grounds keeper and Minerva got a chance to send an owl to Harry Potter rather than just charming dozens of letters to arrive at the boy's home of record, and an unnamed individual got fried a short time later when he tried to break into one of the goblins' ultra secret, ultra secure, vaults.

IIIIIIII

Sirius was awoken at an ungodly hour by his excited godson bursting into his bedroom without even the courtesy of an alcoholic drink for his faithful godfather.

"It came!" Harry screamed. "My letter, it finally came."

"Great, but that's no reason to wake a guy up at bloody-" He checked the clock. "Eleven in the bloody morning. Come back in a few hours when I'm awake and we can deal with it then."

"What's going on?" Sirius' latest pillow murmured.

"Nothing," Sirius replied. "Go back to sleep."

Sirius awoke a few hours later and, after a bit of late afternoon entertainment, went off in search of his godson.

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The obliviators smiled at a job well done as they watched the boy's reunion with his parents. It was jobs like this that made them proud of their chosen career.

"What'd you make the parents think?" obliviator asked his partner.

"That he'd been off on some sort of school thing . . . and that they all needed to go on a diet and start exercising," he replied. "What'd you make the boy think?"

"That he'd been picked up by the peelers for nicking something he ought not have nicked and that he needs to go on a diet and do some exercise," he answered his partner. "Bit of a nasty bugger so I thought I'd fix it before he had a chance to get worse at that posh school they're sending him to."

"Might I suggest a pint or ten to celebrate?"

"Might I suggest that you're a bloody genius?"

The two obliviators grinned at each other before popping off to the nearest pub for some tasty and refreshing beverages.

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It was odd to be back in Old Blighty, Sirius reflected to himself. He hadn't set foot in the land of his birth for almost a decade, not since Harry had learned to change his own diapers. He was amazed at how much things had changed. Best find a local guide, he decided to himself. Saved effort all around.

"I'm Sir . . . er . . . Cyril Black," Sirius said nervously. "Just your common, everyday, normal muggle and this is my godson. We're here to get him some magical things and I was hoping that you could help us . . . uh . . . seeing as how I'm obviously a muggle that's never

been to the magical world before and so couldn't possibly secretly be a wizard or anything."

"I'd love to help," the attractive witch agreed, taking in the man's old fashion robes. Only a muggle would wear robes that had gone out of style ten years before, she thought to herself. Although, he was kinda cute in an idiotic sort of way.

"So tell me, uh . . . What was your name again?"

"I didn't give it," she said with a grin. "It's Carla."

"So tell me, Carla, do you have a gag reflex?" Sirius asked, it was important to establish a rapport and get the important questions out of the way early in a relationship.

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Voldemort glared down at the cooling corpse of his former host. He'd told that idiot to be careful but nooo, and now his plans were delayed till he found another patsy to infect. Sometimes he wondered if being a dark lord was all it was cut out to be, maybe he'd have been happier as a tax agent or something. All the perks of being able to torture anyone you wanted without the associated risks. Something to consider anyway.

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Things were going great, Sirius thought to himself. A couple more minutes and he'd have his plans for the day set.

"You've traveled to all those places?" Carla gasped. "That's amazing."

"Well . . . I don't want to blow my own horn, though I probability could if I tried," Sirius told the rapidly reddening witch.

"Really?" the witch squeaked.

"Care to go someplace private where you can find out for yourself?" Sirius rejoindered.

"What about your godson?" Carla murmured.

"He can take care of himself," Sirius assured the woman.

Harry cleared his throat and stuck out his hand.

"So long as he has a sack full of gold to help him pass the time," Sirius clarified, dropping it into the boy's hand. "Get your shopping done and meet me at the Leaky Cauldron."

Harry pocked the gold then glanced around till he found a likely target. A distinguished looking woman in her early to mid thirties with a miniature version of herself in tow. Perfect.

"Good afternoon," Harry greeted the woman. "I'm an adorable young boy and my guardian has just abandoned me to keep company with some random tart."

"What?" The woman looked down at him.

Harry gave her his best puppy dog look, eliciting a grin from the woman and a giggle from the girl.

"What do you want?" the woman asked, smirking down at him.

"I was hoping to convince you to accompany me on my shopping so I'd have someone along that could cast charms to keep my school things from being too much of a pain to carry," Harry said honestly. "The thought that you might be moved to buy me ice cream or something later might have also crossed my mind."

"I'm a dentist, there's no way I'm getting you or anyone anything so bad for their teeth," the woman replied, seemingly on the edge of laughter. "And I can't do magic. What now?"

"What about accompanying me?" Harry persisted.

"Why?"

"You've got a cute younger sister," Harry replied, winking at the daughter. Eliciting a blush from the girl and a snort from her mother.

"Come along then," the woman sighed. "I'm Juliet Granger and this is my daughter, Hermione."

"Pleased to meet you," Hermione said politely.

"So tell me, Hermione." Harry frowned, using Sirius' favored pick up line was probability not the best idea. "What do you like to do for fun?"

|||||

Voldemort found his new host superior to his old in just about every conceivable way. He was bigger, stronger, more magically powerful, and much, much stupider meaning that there was plenty of room to stretch out.

Knowing that his previous host's inept attempt to steal the stone had given Dumbledore more than enough time and warning to move the stone, he didn't even try to make a second attempt at retrieving it from Gringotts. He watched as the owl left to deliver his application. Hogwarts here he came.

|||||

A snap summoned the Cauldron's house elf. A bag of gold and some whispered instructions ensured that Harry would be taken care of. Carla was too good not to have a couple more rounds with.

|||||

Severus sneered, frowned, and sneered again. A quick glance at the book followed by another at the mirror showed that he was curling his lip a touch too much. James Potter's spawn was coming to Hogwarts and he needed to bring out his A game if he wanted to avenge himself on the little bastard.

|||||||

Harry didn't see Sirius until it was nearly time to go to the station to catch the Hogwarts Express. When his godfather finally did emerge from his room, he was a changed man.

"I'm telling you, Harry, I think I'm in love with this thing she can do with her tongue," Sirius sighed.

"What?" The boy was shocked, he'd never heard his godfather sound so sappy before.

"I don't think I could be satisfied without it," Sirius continued. "Do you think she'd be offended if I asked her to join us so she could teach other women how to do it?"

"I don't know, Sirius," Harry replied.

"Maybe I could get her to write a manual or something," Sirius mused.

"We need to go to the station, Sirius," Harry reminded the man.

"Right," Sirius agreed. "You have everything?"

"Yeah," Harry replied.

"Well, just in case, here's a big sack of gold so you can buy anything you forgot or don't want me to know you have," Sirius stated, handing it over.

"Thank you, Sirius," Harry said.

"Are you old enough to need to know how to smuggle pornography, alcohol, and hallucinogens into Hogwarts?"

"I don't think so," Harry stated.

"Right, just let me know when you are so I can teach you. For now all you need to know is that kiestering: A, means you don't get to carry

much and B, means shoving something up your bum. Forget it unless you have a patsy to do it for you and don't use any of what you got in that way. Strictly for sales and best to have your patsy sell it for you so you don't have to touch it."

"You've already told me, Sirius, remember?" Harry asked. "The border crossing where you got that guy cavity searched?"

"His own fault for having such a tasty looking wife," Sirius defended his actions. "But that's not important, the important thing is to remember that if you act confident enough you can get the average wizard to believe anything."

"Okay, Sirius," Harry agreed. "Can we go to the station now? I don't want to miss the train."

"Let's go."

AN: The rest of the fic is in fragmentary Omake form below. Just couldn't write the bits in between for one reason or another. I tried, just wouldn't flow, so I'm tossing it out into the world.

Scenes/Polish by dogbertcarroll

Ideas by

James Edmiston

Omake: The Station

Hermione had arrived at the station two hours before the suggested time and had put quite a bit of thought into picking out her car on the train. First of all, it needed to have a window that would allow her to monitor the entrance to the magical section. Second of all, it needed to be near enough to the aforementioned entrance that she'd be easily heard by anyone coming through the magical entrance. This was all because- The girl threw open the window and leaned out. "Harry, I saved us a place!" she called out. She finally had a friend and wanted to enjoy it.

"Okay, Hermione!" Harry replied.

Polish by dogbertcarroll

Omake: The Interview

After Harry kills a number of DADA professors in the first couple months:

"I was surprised to hear that so many other instructors had left to pursue other opportunities," Lockheart said with a vacant smile.

"Yes, other opportunities," Albus agreed innocently. "When can you start?"

People start suspecting that Dumbledore is using the position to get rid of his enemies, Harry demands a promise that the Professor isn't going to try to kill him before returning for year two. If they weren't so inept, he'd have been worried.

Omake: Dealing With Snape

"Gooooood morning students," Snape said with a wide smile. "Who'd like to know how to make whiskey with nothing but your potions sets and some things from the kitchen?"

The students gave a mighty cheer.

"Wuuuuuuunderful," the crooked nosed man replied.

"Harry," Hermione whispered to her friend.

"Yeah, Hermione?"

"When you said you were going to take care of Snape, I didn't expect this," she said.

"What did you expect?" he asked.



"I figured you'd kill him, you know, like you've done to all those Defense Professors," she admitted.

"They all tried to kill me first. He hasn't, least I'm pretty sure he hasn't," Harry explained. "Hell, the bastard's even saved my life a time or two."

"Potter!" Snape snapped. "Your flame is too high, you're not going to get the good stuff with such high temps."

"Sorry, Professor," Harry said.

"Just don't let it happen again," Snape grumbled.

"What did you do to him?" Hermione demanded.

"Nothing much," he laughed.

"Harry," she growled.

"I hired him a hooker."

Omake: Mutually Intelligible

"But . . . I don't speak snake," Harry replied, pasting a look of honest bewilderment on his face.

"We just heard you," Ron accused.

"Ah, that wasn't snake," Harry laughed.

"Bloody well sounded like it to me," one of the other students mumbled.

"Hermione," Harry called out. "Would you mind explaining mutually intelligible languages to them?"

"It's when two people speak different languages, but the languages are close enough that they can understand each other," the girl said dutifully.

"So that wasn't snake, it was just something close to it?" Ron asked slowly.

"Bingo," Harry agreed. "Glad we've got that settled."

"If it wasn't snake, what was it?" one of the other students asked.

"And give up a secret ability that could help me fight dark wizards?" Harry asked. "Only a future dark wizard would want me to do something like that."

"None of us want to know what language that was, right guys?!" Ron demanded.

"Right!"

The mob disbursed, leaving Harry alone with his only intelligent friend.

"It's a good thing wizards are so dumb," Hermione commented.

"Makes life easier anyway," Harry agreed.

Addition by ausfinbar

Of course, this then brings to mind...

What language does he claim to speak?

I'd like to see this fleshed out and people trying to find out what language he claims to speak

"Sorry, I don't speak Mongoose...but nice try"

"It's an interesting fact that Wombat and Snake are closely related, like French and Latin. Must be because of all the Snakes in Australia"

"No, I don't speak Dragon, but like them, I have a fond preference for communicating through shadow puppets and flatulence."

"You honestly thought I could speak Bat? That's just insulting. Those little bastards have the foulest mouths anywhere. They could make a sailor blush!"

Omake: Motto

"One more word, Malfoy, and I'll show you why the Potter family motto is; Matrem tuam pedicavi," Harry growled.

Draco turned white with rage, unable to speak he nudged the girl by his side, indicating that she should give his reply.

"One more threat, Potter, and Draco will show you why the Malfoy family motto is: Noli me necare, cape omnia pecunias meas," Pansy replied with a sneer. At her side, Draco nodded with enthusiastic approval.

Omake: Invisibility

"POTTER, I'LL KILL YOU!" Draco screamed. The boy started slow but picked up speed as he charged towards his nemesis. "AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH-" \*WHAM\* The boy froze for a second before crumpling to the ground.

"And you said spending three weeks learning how to conjure an invisible wall was a waste of time," Harry said smugly.

"How often is that going to be useful?" Hermione countered.

"Just this once makes it all worth it," Harry replied. "Did you see the look on his face?"

"I . . . okay, I suppose you're right," she conceded making a mental note to devote a bit of time to the subject of recording and replaying memories.

Omake: Dealing with Dementors

"It's Bellatrix, my Lord," the Death Eater said nervously.

"What about her?" Voldemort demanded.

"Azkaban has changed her, my Lord," the Death Eater said cautiously.

"In what way?" Voldemort demanded.

"Well . . . for one, she's much more flexible than she used to be."

"Show me," Voldemort ordered. The Dark Lord followed his minion down the corridor and up a flight of stairs to Bella's quarters.

"That's all she does all day," the minion said, waving at the contorted woman. "She doesn't even have any interest in torturing muggles anymore." He flinched, expecting a Crucio. "My Lord?"

"Leave us," Voldemort commanded.

"Yes, my Lord," the minion simpered.

"And have someone send up a box of tissues and some lotion," Voldemort called after the man. "The good stuff, all natural with lanolin."

Omake: Quitting

"That is it, that is bloody it!" Voldemort screamed. "I can't take it any longer, I quit!"

"What . . . what about us?" Lucius whined. "What are we supposed to do?"

"I don't give a rat's anus!" Voldemort replied. "You idiots are just going to have to find a new dark lord!"

"A new dark lord?" Flint mumbled.

"Right!" Wormtail spoke up. "Listen up you lot, I'm in charge now and what I say goes."

Either it succeeds and the Dark Lord Wormtail makes an appearance or all the Death Eaters kill each other fighting to be the next dark lord. Or possibly they place an ad in the Prophet which Sirius answers, bring me your wives commanded the dark lord padfoot.

#### Omake: A Second Career

"What's all this about then?" Vernon blustered as he was shown into the civil servant's office.

"Mr. Vernon Durley?" the pale man behind the desk asked.

"It's Dursley," Vernon corrected sourly.

"Of course. My name is Tom Riddle and I have a number of questions regarding these deductions you've claimed."

#### Omake: The Ending

Years after his transport to his wondrous new home, the grey muzzled mutt laid his head down for the last time and quietly expired. He was one of the wizarding world's greatest heroes and no one would ever know it.

AN: And that was to be the end of the fic. Fairly pleased with that part, injects a bit of seriousness into a fic filled with Siriusness.

#### Omake: A Reference

Hermione looked up from her book. "Did you know that the leading cause of death in Demon Lords is ruining vacations?" A frown appeared on the girl's face. "Wait, that can't be right, can it?"

Luna peaked over her friend's shoulder. "Seventh Duke of Hell Bakaranzeqexk, died horribly after interrupting a guy who just wanted to have a quiet vacation. Lord Quakafuzz of the third level, died horribly after attacking an individual who referred to himself as quote 'just a guy on vacation' end quote. Prince Karnakqzz, general of the

fifteenth legion, baron of pain, duke of horror, disappeared after ruining the vacation of an unnamed and indescribable individual."

Omake by Veive

"Tell me, Harry," Dumbledore said "How did Lucius Malfoy come to be at the bottom of a stairwell with no less than five pikes and lances protruding from his corpse?"

"He tripped, sir."

"When did he trip, Harry?"

"After I left your office to return Tom Riddle's diary, sir."

"I See, Harry." Dumbledore's Eyes Twinkled™. "And how did he trip?"

"He tripped over his cape and fell over the railing on the 7th floor balcony down the Hall from your office."

"I see, and how did the suits of armor come to fall on top of him?"

"They flew off of the balcony after Mr. Malfoy, I suspect he latched onto them with accidental magic."

"Harry, I was not aware of any suits of armor in the 7th floor hallway nor on the balcony," Dumbledore replied gravely.

"I think they were enchanted, sir," Harry replied, with utmost care to keep the laughter out of his voice and the smile off of his face.

"Enchanted, how?"

"I think they only appeared when no one was looking at them," Harry said seriously, which is not to be confused with seriously. "I didn't see them until they flew over the railing after Mr. Malfoy."

"Ah," Dumbledore said. "That must be where Phineas put the experimental stealth armor," he said with another Eye Twinkle™ and a nod. "Thank you, Harry. That will be all."

Harry carefully schooled his features into neutrality until he was well away from the headmaster's office.

"Wow, I guess Sirius was serious," he said to himself as he finally allowed himself to grin. "You really can get away with anything as long as you keep the first rule in mind."

Polish by dogbertcarroll

Chp142